WALKING ROUND BORROWASH

Marion Johnson

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STREET MAP OF BORROWASH

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WHY WALK?

Borrowash deserves a close examination. It is not particularly beautiful, certainly not romantic, but well worth walking through with a 'seeing eye' and an enquiring mind. The houses of present day Borrowash may be ordinary but they show changing styles, fashions and standards and indicate how family life has changed over two hundred years. The pattern of streets and the street names have a story to tell. These streets which we walk along every week, to the bus stop, to the shops or to work, are taken for granted and little is noticed. Worse still, they are driven through and nothing is seen of the village but the road signs and other vehicles. Try these walks and you might be surprised at what you have missed.

As you wander about the village it is worth keeping an eye on the situation of Borrowash. Have you ever noticed the slope down towards the River Derwent? It can be seen at the bottom of Victoria Avenue, down Station Road, and down Draycott Road. At the junction of Station Road and Nottingham Road the height above sea level is 166 feet; at the other end of Station Road near the river it is about 130 feet. This difference in height has been sufficient to protect most of the village from flooding by the Derwent. After the flood prevention works on the Derwent and Trent had improved the situation Borrowash was fairly safe from the big river, but not from the small Ock Brook. The main road has had enough water for boats on several occasions within living memory, all from that little stream which runs under the Nottingham Road to join the Derwent. Most earlier inhabitants had built their houses away from the Ock. Their houses followed the main road where it is about 160 feet above sea level and they avoided the area near to the banks of the Ock where it dips to about 140 feet, a dip easily seen on the road. Only in recent years have builders made more use of this lower land, with the result that some residents have suffered from flood waters in their homes. The latest work on the Ock flood prevention schemes seems to have been successful.

Another thing to notice about the site of Borrowash is the way in which it ignores the parish boundary. The centre is within Ockbrook parish but the houses, even in the eighteenth century, extended westwards into the parish of Spondon. In this century the boundary between Ockbrook and Spondon has been moved westwards to keep the bulk of the village within one parish. Spondon is still the parish on our western border but Derby city, having grown until it includes Spondon, is our new neighbour. The southern boundary, between our parish and the parish of Elvaston follows the middle of the River Derwent.

Because it stands in the parish of Ockbrook, Borrowash is frequently compared with the village of that name, usually, but not always, to the detriment of Borrowash. "A very uninteresting village" is the verdict of a writer in 1895, but before condemning him for this read a few sentences

further and find "Ockbrook is not an interesting village", so the score is even. Another judgement was "There is nothing to detain us in Borrowash, it has no history." This is far from the case. Pre-Roman times are very misty in both villages. There is still much to be discovered locally about the Romans but it was the Borrowash area of the parish which had the Roman road. Both villages are in the records of the royal courts of the middle ages. They had farming and the domestic industry in common, but river traffic gave Borrowash more economic significance than Ockbrook. Borrowash had the canal and the railway and the bridge over the Derwent. The mills on the river, mentioned in the records of Abbey of Dale in the thirteenth century, were still working in the twentieth century. Admittedly Borrowash lacks the views of surrounding fields on the gentle hills which Ockbrook enjoys (but for how much longer?) If we admit that Ockbrook has the more pleasant aspect, might we claim that Borrowash has the greater historical interest? Walking round the village may help to give an answer to this question.

The last general point to make before starting out is the name itself. The name Borrowash presents some difficulty for outsiders. There is little doubt that it used to be pronounced Borrow-ash. Manuscripts from the middle ages onwards have the name as two words, - Burrow Ash, Borowe Ashe, Borough Ash, Borrows Ash and even Burough Sashe. What happened to the name? An inhabitant who grew up in the village in the 1860s wrote, "People today, misled by the spelling and corrupted by the example of a former station master, an East Anglian named Boddington, have taken to calling the place Borro-wash, to rhyme with the word 'wash'. But in my day it was called Borrow-ash, to rhyme with 'sash', and the older people often called it Borrowsash." Now Borro-wash is the accepted pronunciation and Borrow-ash is thought to be an affectation. Is it time a campaign was started for a return to the proper pronunciation of Borrow-ash?

A NOTE ON THE WALKS

The accounts of the walks are lengthy and they cannot be read as you face the hazards of modern traffic. Perhaps it is better to regard them as armchair reading to precede and to follow each walk. Read a chapter first to find out what to look for, take it with you on the walk for brief reference and read it again on return to find out what you missed. When you walk that way again you may notice many things which are not mentioned in this book. Perhaps what you see will remind you of other facts about the village and before long you will have worked out your own personal guided tour. If so I hope you will share it with your friends and walking companions so that more and more people can walk with open eyes and with enjoyment.

WALK 1

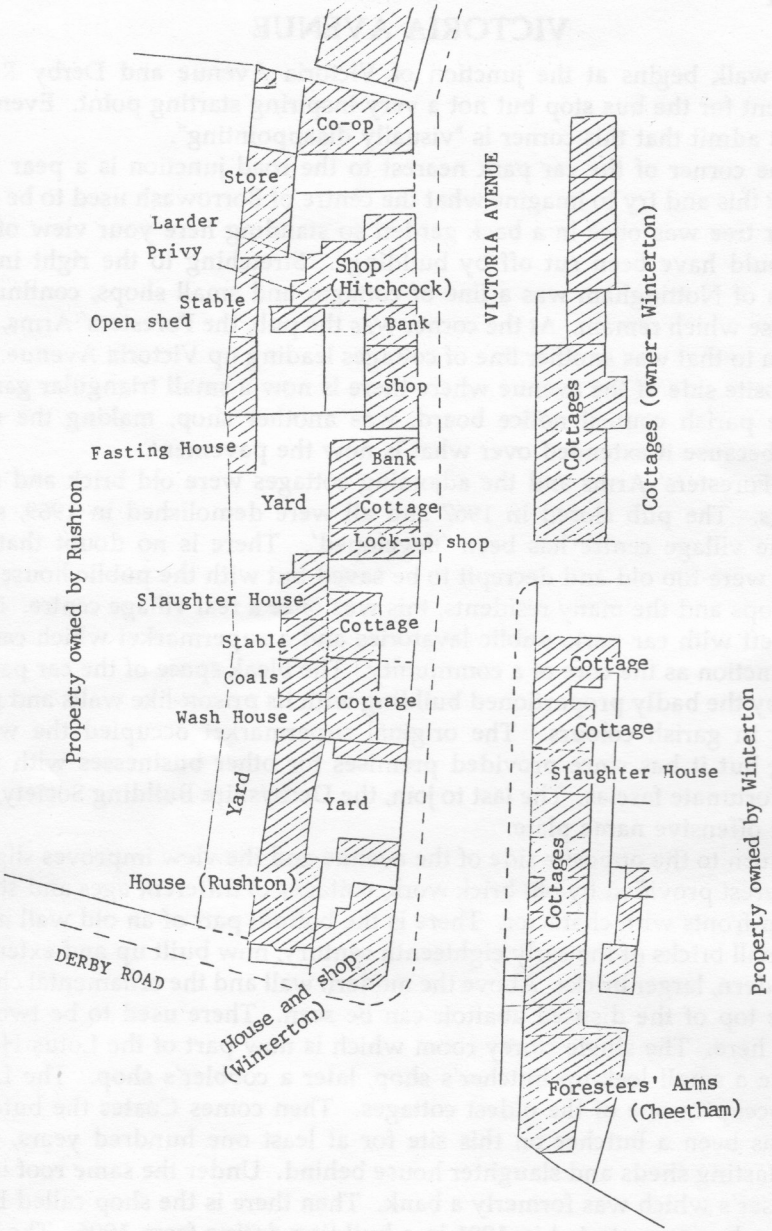
VICTORIA AVENUE

The walk begins at the junction of Victoria Avenue and Derby Road, convenient for the bus stop but not a very inspiring starting point. Even the planners admit that this corner is "visually disappointing".

In the corner of the car park nearest to the road junction is a pear tree. Stand by this and try to imagine what the centre of Borrowash used to be like. The pear tree was once in a back garden so standing here your view of the road would have been cut off by buildings. Stretching to the right in the direction of Nottingham was a line of cottages and small shops, continuous with those which remain. At the corner was the pub, the Foresters' Arms, and joined on to that was another line of cottages leading up Victoria Avenue. On the opposite side of the avenue where there is now a small triangular garden with the parish council notice board, was another shop, making the road narrow because it extended over what is now the pavement.

The Foresters' Arms and the adjoining cottages were old brick and slate buildings. The pub closed in 1967 and all were demolished in 1969, since when the village centre has been 'developed'. There is no doubt that the cottages were too old and decrepit to be saved but with the public house, the small shops and the many residents, this was once a real village centre. Now we are left with car park, public lavatories and a supermarket which cannot really function as the core of a community. The bleak space of the car park is backed by the badly proportioned building with its prison-like walls and poor lettering in garish colours. The original supermarket occupied the whole building but it has since provided premises for other businesses with their own unfortunate fascias. The last to join, the Derbyshire Building Society, has the least offensive name plate.

But turn to the opposite side of the avenue and the view improves slightly with interest provided by old brick work, cottages of different ages and styles, and shop fronts with character. There is the bottom part of an old wall made of the small bricks of the early eighteenth century, now built up and extended with modern, larger bricks. Above the modern wall and the ornamental cherry trees the top of the disused abattoir can be seen. There used to be two old cottages here. The single storey room which is now part of the Lotus House was once a small lock-up butcher's shop, later a cobbler's shop. The Lotus House occupies one of the oldest cottages. Then comes Coates the butcher. There has been a butcher on this site for at least one hundred years, with stables, fasting sheds and slaughter house behind. Under the same roof is the hairdresser's which was formerly a bank. Then there is the shop called Body Matters, a business started in 1991 in a building dating from 1906. The map on the following page gives a full picture of all the activities in this stretch of road as they were recorded by tax inspectors in 1912.



VICTORIA AVENUE CORNER IN 1912

The antique shop occupies the building which used to be a branch of the Derby Co-operative Society. This Derby branch was not the first co-op in Borrowash for the village once had its own independent Co-operative Society and its shop was here. The society, registered in 1874, was strong enough to buy premises in Ockbrook and it opened a branch at number 1, Flood Street. But the Borrowash Co-operative Society Limited came to grief. The older inhabitants of Borrowash who listened to their grand-parents' gossip think that there were losses; workers, they heard, had long narrow bags specially made to slip down inside a trouser leg and these would be walked out filled with tea or sugar. At the end there were 175 members all of whom signed the instrument of dissolution in 1903 and all received a share of the capital of £858.

This was not the end of co-operation in Borrowash for the membership was taken over by the Derby Co-operative Society. Both shops were kept open and the Derby Society spent £160 on enlarging and improving the Borrowash branch, opening it as a grocery and butchery. The Derby Co-op had a policy of expansion, acquiring small neighbouring societies. This policy was common to the co-op societies throughout the country and it met with opposition from small traders, some of whom joined together to fight for their trade, a story repeated a few generations later with the rise of the supermarket and shopping centre.

Beyond the old co-op building comes Long Row, the line of cottages built 1850 to 1851 by the Greasleys of Ockbrook (later of Borrowash). They were not built all at once, as can be seen from the divisions of the brick bonding on the fronts. At first they were occupied mainly by the workers of Towle's cotton factory on the Derwent. Such housing has been much maligned for its standard of accommodation, but for their time these were well built, bigger and healthier than existing houses. They have lasted well; in danger of demolition in the 1970s, they were saved by the District Surveyor claiming they had at least another fifteen years of useful life in them. Up to about thirty years ago they retained their uniformity, a pleasing brownish brick, sash windows, and garden walls with red triangular coping stones. Today, owners show their individuality with many varieties of stucco and facings, and windows and doors imitating various older styles but rarely that of the 1850s, with the result that the overall simplicity, uniformity and dignity of the row have been lost.

Built in by every front door was a boot scraper, very necessary in the days of unsurfaced roads. The avenue was asphalted by Shardlow Rural District Council in 1898. Most of the boot scrapers have disappeared or been mutilated. That at number 35 remains in fine condition and there are about four more in the rest of the row. Some houses still have the old house numbers, small cast iron ovals, and it is good to see they remain for these were some of the first houses in the parish to be numbered. The Parish Council requested

numbering to help the postmen in the late 1890s. The terraces of smaller houses were numbered first because the larger houses had names 'built in'. It was, and is, customary for the numbering to begin at the main road junction with odd numbers on the left and even numbers on the right. For many years the number 13 was omitted.

Interrupting the rows of mid-nineteenth century cottages is a taller pair, numbers 61 and 63, once known as Lloyds' cottages after the man who owned them about 1800. They have the pleasant proportions of eighteenth century houses, and do notice the size of the bricks.

Another interruption in the line of 1850s cottages is the old chapel opened in 1851. This was a Primitive Methodist Chapel, much favoured by the poorer folk of Borrowash because they could attend services wearing their smocks and did not feel they were expected to wear 'Sunday Best' as at church or at the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel. It was enlarged in 1871. The building was not used as a chapel after 1903 when the new one was opened on the opposite side of the road, but it continued to be used as a Sunday School for some years.

In 1950 the chapel was bought by the Ockbrook and Borrowash branch of the Women's Institute for £200. The members themselves advanced money free of interest to meet the cost of repairs and alterations (including a stage). In 1954, when the branch celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary, all the debts on the building had been paid. Meeting the costs so quickly indicates that the members were both hard working and adept at fund raising; their whist drives, concerts, drama groups, and much more meant it was a focus for much activity. The hall was also a valuable asset because it was available for village events and for hire by other organisations such as the mother and baby clinic. But national policy of the W.I. and new ideas of the changing membership caused the local branch to sell the building in 1989.

Now the front has been changed and the interior converted into offices. Although a listed building the original windows of Georgian proportions have been replaced by very large windows and the panelled wooden door has been replaced by plate glass. The red brick which was the hallmark of Borrowash village is hidden under stucco of pseudo-Devon-cottage cream and its original character has gone. The only remaining evidence of its life as a chapel is the inscription above the door,-

THEY SHALL PROSPER THAT LOVE THEE 1851

A clause in the deeds of the building demands that this inscription shall remain, and so it does, but painted over so that it is barely legible. Perhaps the insurance firm now in occupation thinks it an unsuitable sentiment.

On the east side of the avenue stands the chapel of 1903, a sturdy building typical of chapel architecture of the early twentieth century with its stone dressings and carved finials. One stained glass window faces the road, and

it is fortunate that as the building is now the public library, all can go in to see its good colours and design. The open roof with pitch pine beams is impressive. Outside, have a look at the foundation stones; some names are still legible, among them that of Mr Edward Elsey of Hopwell Hall. He had given £50 to the first appeal for funds and now "as he declared the stone well and truly laid he gave an additional £100". But the day was not only for the big contributors, "a number of smaller stones and bricks were laid by friends of the church". The stone laying ceremony took place on 9 May 1903, sixteen years after the land had been bought for £80. The cost of the building was to be £900 and the trustees expected to meet all costs by the time it was finished. Since they managed to raise £200 on the day of the stone laying they were probably not being over-ambitious.

The architect was F.S. Antliff of Draycott and the builder G. Wagg. It closed as chapel in 1949 when the Primitive Methodist congregations united with the Wesleyan Methodists.

Continuing up the avenue you see on the right more pairs of semi-detached houses the names of which give away their age. Ladysmith and Ladysmith Cottages 1900 occupy the two corners of the road of the same name. Then come Glencoe, Victoria, Colenso and Coronation Cottages. After Kimberley Road there are the Alexandra Cottages. The place names refer to battles in Boer War; Colenso, Ladysmith and Kimberley were all besieged in the Transvaal campaign 1899 to 1900 and the Pass of Glencoe was a strategic route for the armies. Queen Victoria died in 1901 and the coronation of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra took place in 1902.

There are differences in the details of these houses which add interest without spoiling the regularity; the brick is a pleasant dark colour set off by the stone and plaster dressings; they are solidly built. It seems, then, rather ungenerous to call the builder a speculator, but most of these were owned by one man, John Wright of Hall Street in Alvaston. He bought the building plots for an average of £40 and each house cost in the region of £180 to £200. These houses, unlike the cottages of the 1850s on the opposite side, were subject to building regulations, which is one reason why they are bigger and better built. The Public Health Act of 1875 gave local authorities power to enforce building standards such as walls of minimum thickness, proper damp-proofing and efficient drainage and sewage disposal. There were now water closets (outside) and kitchens with sinks with cold water taps; there would be a copper for washing, meaning a cylinder made of copper incorporated into the kitchen grate (which would need black-leading). So the two sides of the avenue show quite a contrast in building, partly a result of legislation and partly a reflection of the general increase in prosperity, but also because workers in better paid jobs were now coming to live in the area. The one similarity between the two sides of the avenue is the unfortunate use of new

windows and doors quite out of sympathy with the age and style of the houses.

The facades of the late Victorian and Edwardian houses show many features which are typical of their period, when a great deal of building was done on the outskirts of towns and in villages within easy reach of the towns. The use of machine-made moulding and different coloured bricks, quoins and the use of stone and concrete mouldings all gave a bit of individuality to the rather uniform frontages. Numbers 62 and 64 have projecting headers (called corbelling) making a pattern which is emphasised by the use of blue bricks. There are some nice examples of modillions (projecting brackets under the eaves) and dentilations in different patterns. Keep an eye open for the different dentilations (headers of bricks projecting under the eaves) on the avenue houses, there are many styles and some of the patterns are repeated. Did each builder have his own favourite design?

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By now you will be near to the last of the 1850s cottages on the left and it is time to look at the street furniture, a convenient name for signs, posts, bollards, lights and so on. Street furniture is frequently the target of young 'vandals', but in the avenue it seems not to suffer a lot at their hands. The worst damage is done by the adult vandals driving their cars on the grass verges. At the side of Dowsett's shop is a letter box in the wall. Road side letter boxes were first introduced in 1853. This one bears the cipher V R but that is not the only evidence of its age; look carefully for the name of the location and you will see OCKBROOK LANE. This was the name of Victoria Avenue until the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897. The post box has retained its original name for almost one hundred years; long may it continue. The name of the maker can just be deciphered.

Then there are the telegraph posts. That near to the Borrowash Service Centre has an elegant finial at the top, the only one known in Borrowash. Older telegraph poles had their numbers carved in the wood. This one has:-

G P O
30
57

The General Post Office had charge of telephone services before the days of British Telecom. 30 gives the height of the post in feet. 57 tells us the post was erected in 1957. Telegraph posts are getting fewer in number as many of the long distance wires have been put underground. The evidence for this is the iron and concrete covers on the cable joining pits set into the pavements and the dark green rectangular joining boxes. The only poles left are the distribution poles with their wires radiating out to the houses. Try reading the

covers set in the pavement, P O, GPO and POT. Post Office Telephones is a common label. Post Office Telegraphs is comparatively rare but there is one to be seen in the avenue.

The water stop cocks make interesting reading. The oldest are circular with a capital W. The newer plates in the pavements have S D W A, recording the years when Borrowash was supplied by the South Derbyshire Water Authority, 1961 to 1974. The most recent covers have S T W A for the Severn Trent Water Authority.

Outside number 161 is another telegraph pole with the same numbers as the previous one but with the addition of a reflector to warn motorists of the road edge, a great help before efficient street lighting. For obvious reasons these were known as wine gum reflectors.

Fire hydrant indicators on their little concrete posts show up well with a large black H on a yellow background. The numbers give the distance of the hydrant from the indicator in feet. Fire hydrant signs were the first bits of street furniture to be demanded by law but Borrowash has nothing earlier than these twentieth century ones. The most recent ones are flush with the road surface with either F H, or FIRE HYDRANT; measurements are now metric.

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Dowsett's shop has been mentioned. In earlier times it has been a junk shop, a branch of the Derby Co-operative Society and before that a bakery belonging to Mr Carter. The ovens were housed in the old buildings behind the shop. The co-op still owns these dilapidated rear premises. Mr Carter farmed the fields opposite and his barns stood with their high, plain brick walls up to the road side, walls usually plastered with advertising bills. He built himself a house on this farm land, now number 96 and it was built with a very large kitchen in which Mrs Carter could churn the butter. The Borrowash Service Centre has also been mentioned; this is where the Hodgkinson brothers had their stone masons' business.

On the opposite side are the Ashbrook Schools which replaced the old building on Derby Road. This had served as the Borrowash School for 125 years, first as a church school and later taken over by the County Council. As it was too small and without proper facilities, a new building was requested by the parish council as early as 1911 but it was 1965 before these new buildings were opened for infants and juniors.

A few yards beyond the schools is the junction with Deans Drive, cut through in front of a large house called Bloso after the field in which it was built, pronounced Blow-so. The two modern houses at the corner (one built in 1993) are standing in what was once the garden of Bloso. It is necessary to walk a few yards up Deans Drive to see the old house. It was built in the 1860s with a classical portico and large bay windows over looking the fields.

The bricks are covered with stucco in the fashion of the time. Once it was one dwelling with stables on the north side, now it provides three homes. Miss Towle, a member of the Borrowash mill family, lived here for many years. By 1871 she had a gardener who came from Rutland; his name was Eli Burnham and he lived in one of the two Bloso cottages at the road side, now gone. The cottages were built at the same time as Bloso House; they were rather ornate, fashionably 'gothic', and thatched, fine examples of the romantic cottage architecture of the mid-nineteenth century. The census of 1871 tells us that at that time Miss Towle had a cook and a housemaid both with the name Burnham; they were the sisters of Eli. It was this family which established Burnham's Covent Garden Nurseries in the 1880s, which you have just passed on the left of the road. Fifty years ago these nurseries covered thirty acres, some owned and some rented, used for nursery stock, flowers and vegetables with a quarter of an acre of tomatoes under glass. Arthur Burnham, a son of Eli, was a builder as well as a nurseryman and he built the present shop and house and the two houses next door called Charnwood Villas as well as houses in Ockbrook. The nursery firm is still run by the same family.

The Victorian and Edwardian villas continue up to the by-pass. They are well built and it seems the builders enjoyed putting in individual decorative touches which present day houses lack. Some have decorated chimney pots; chimney stacks have 'string courses' to match those on the facades; dentils vary as before. Redholme, Fairholme and Glenholme are three houses with delightful individuality in brickwork, chimney pots, classical pillars and finials.

Behind one of the houses in this stretch is a stockingers' shop; it is in a private garden and so cannot be seen. One of the main industries of the parish in the nineteenth century was framework knitting and many cottagers had stocking frames; some had workshops for a number of frames. The industry was dying by the 1870s but Thomas Lewesley of Ockbrook, reputed to be the last owner of silk stocking frames in the parish, built his shop and house about 1892. The shop is about twenty yards from the house in a garden which is "long enough to walk the dog in". It is a brick and slate building about seventeen feet by nine feet, with a blue brick floor and lath and plaster ceiling. There is a small fireplace. The south side has long windows just under the eaves, five of them, each over a yard from side to side. These windows were the essential feature of the stockingers' shops, giving the necessary side light. There is a long notched peg by the side of each window to hang the lamp. Thomas Lewesley was listed in a trade directory as a silk hosier as late as 1903.

There is another story concerning the Lewesley family. Thomas had a daughter Clarice who married the head gardener at Elvaston Castle, aptly named Mr Goodacre. Mr Goodacre bred roses and when he raised one he thought particularly beautiful he called it Clarice Goodacre, a rose which is still sometimes found in gardeners' catalogues. It was listed in Barron's rose

catalogue for 1916 at a price of 10/6. It was both very new and very special to command such a price when his general run of roses sold for 7/6 a dozen.

There are more decorative touches to see on the following houses on the left, including fanlights, aprons (patterns of raised bricks under the windows), and ridge tiles. Most of these were the work of local builders between 1892 and 1908, all built the edge of a large field called Greenway Close. This name is recorded in the seventeenth century but is surely a very much older name, indicating an ancient track way. Could it once have linked with Green Lane in Ockbrook, providing the route from the north to a crossing of the Derwent? The name is preserved now in the house Greenway Lodge and in Greenway Close.

The house Greenway Lodge is thought to have been built soon after 1800, being an extension to an eighteenth century house called Ockbrook Cottage which is now a separate dwelling. The bay windows were built on about 1900 by Arthur Burnham. Round about 1910 another addition was made on the south side, now Greenway Cottage.

In its Victorian hey-day Greenway Lodge had two maids living in the attic and the original Ockbrook Cottage at the back housed the carriage, horse and groom. It was bought by Miss Eliza Huish in 1868 from the Swindell family of Borrowash Manor House. It was after the death of Miss Huish in 1889 that the road-side edge of the field called Greenway Close was sold for building. Thomas Lewesley was one of the first to buy a plot and his two houses were built by William Rice. The building line was set by these houses at "twenty feet from the stools of the hedge at the road side". Other buyers were John Brennan of Borrowash and W. Loftus, a builder of several houses in Ockbrook.

Incidentally Miss Huish bequeathed to her maid Fanny Kerry an annuity chargeable on this land but other arrangements were made by the solicitors. "Fanny Kerry had agreed to release the said premises from the said annuity" and was satisfied that the remaining lands were sufficient to pay the annuity. Fanny is mentioned here because she was a member of a long-established Borrowash family.

It is at Greenway Lodge that the road bends a little to the right for the fly-over to cross the by-pass. It is possible to end this walk here and catch a bus in Hawthorne Avenue. Some might like to return down the avenue to find items missed on the way up. For these the next chapter makes a separate walk. Those who are feeling strong might like to continue and complete the full circle; for them the next chapter will continue this first walk.

WALK 2

FROM THE BY-PASS TO THE OCK BROOK

You may be starting a new walk here on Victoria Avenue near the end of Hawthorne Avenue, or you may be finishing off the first walk. Whichever it is we shall start by looking at the letter box. Why are they called 'pillar boxes'? For the simple reason that the earliest ones were designed like a pillar, a fluted column as found in ancient Greek temples. This one dates from the time when they were a plainer shape. It is easy to see in which reign it was made, but not so easy to read that it was made in Stirlingshire. The firm of Carron and Company at Falkirk was one of the chief makers of pillar boxes.

You begin the walk by following the original course of the avenue, which means you must ignore the road which bends a bit to the right and rises to the bridge and instead continue in a straight line, between the two plane trees which were once on opposite sides of the road. On the left is Overdale Surgery taking its name from the house name engraved on the stone coping of the gate post. This building keeps its character because the new windows are a reflection of the original sash windows and the rebuilt chimney stacks are exact replicas of the original ones, repeating the pattern of the string course.

Behind the phone box and the plane tree on the right was once the large house called Brookfield, home of Dr. John Aspinall Hunt, a descendant of the Hunts of Bartlewood Lodge in Ockbrook. The house was built by his wife's parents, the Lillys of Spondon, and included a surgery and waiting room. It was quite usual for G. P.s to 'live over the shop' in the days before Medical Centres were invented. In addition to being the local doctor he was assistant house surgeon at the then Derby General Infirmary and Medical Officer for the Spondon District and for the Shardlow Union. It is reliably reported that "in the olden days when doctors manufactured their own medicines Dr. John Hunt distilled his digitalis from the foxgloves of Dale". It was this doctor who argued so strongly for the parish to have a water supply from the Derwent Valley Water Scheme. These aspects of his work were typical of the doctor's lot during the first decades of this century.

A death in the Hunt family was also, sadly, typical of these years. There is a memorial in Ockbrook church which reads:-

In ever loving memory of John Reginald Lilly Hunt
2nd. Lieut. 5th. Sherwood Foresters the only and dearly
loved son of John Aspinall and Minnie Beatrice Hunt
who fell while gallantly leading his men into action at
Commecourt France July 1st 1916 aged 19 years.
He gave his heart to his home, his life to his king
and country and his soul to God.

Brookfield with its large garden was sacrificed in 1968 to the fly-over and the only remnant of it is part of the garden wall which now forms the boundary of the garden of number 172.

The next two houses with fretted barge boards and iron work date from about 1900. The following houses on this right side, though they look so similar were built over a period of 30 years; numbers 188 and 190 are the oldest, built in 1878. Most retain their original warm coloured bricks, correctly shaped windows and the fanlights; only a few have been treated unsympathetically in recent years. They still bear the house names which were built in as permanent features before the days of numbered houses.

On the left you pass the end of Field Close and later a house called Rose Acre. Both of these are old field names. Rose Acre was the field used for parish celebrations. In 1935 the Silver Jubilee of King George V was celebrated here with an open-air service of thanksgiving followed by sports, a brass band, a bonfire and fireworks. Rose Acre field was in the news again in the late 1940s when it was the proposed site for the Ockbrook Secondary Grammar School. This was in the heady days after the war when local schools for small communities were still appreciated. Alas, the delays in building such schools were so long that the plans were overtaken by the grand ideas of comprehensives of 1,000 or more pupils. So Ockbrook never got its secondary school.

The last building on the left, next to the A52, is Woodbine Cottage, now in private hands but originally built and donated to the parish by Joseph Birkinshaw as a home for the District Nurse. With the advent of the National Health Service local charities and independent efforts were (very mistakenly) discouraged or thought unnecessary; the local Health Authority was not able to use the bungalow for its original purpose, yet it could not use it for other purposes because it was the subject of a charitable trust. The bungalow stood empty for many years whilst legal problems were solved and it was eventually sold in 1980.

The junction of the avenue with the by-pass was a standard crossroad when it was laid out in 1958. Perhaps this was because the road was first planned prior to 1939 and that plan was not changed to cope with the very different traffic flow of the late '50s. Although there were many accidents it was ten years before local concern and pressure gained the slip roads and the fly-over. The bridge was officially opened in March 1969.

It is now time to leave the old Victoria Avenue. Turn your back on the nurse's bungalow and walk along the grass verge of the A52. A pair of houses stood here until the by-pass came. There are steps to take you on to the fly-over. From the middle of the bridge, looking west, Spondon Church steeple stands out clearly. Apart from the two petrol stations it is a view of fields, a remnant of the farming land which used to occupy most of the parish. The sky line beyond shows the newer building of Spondon creeping ever

nearer. Towards the right can be seen the eighteenth century buildings of the Ockbrook Moravian Settlement on the hill. The wooden cupola is a landmark and below it is the chiming clock which is heard in Borrowash only when the by-pass traffic subsides.

Cross the bridge (carefully, for not everyone obeys the 30 m.p.h. limit) and the view is rather different. Not far away and a bit to the left, is the spire of Ockbrook church. Nearer, to the right, are the allotments gardens on land that once belonged to the church, Far Parson Close. More recently it was called Vicarage Field because the 1868 vicarage was built in the northern corner of it. The vicarage suffered the same fate as Brookfield when the fly-over was built. The allotments here started in 1892 when six men of Borrowash leased three acres for gardens at an annual rent of eight pounds. The tenants were to fence and lay out the allotments and to make an approach road ten feet wide. The remnants of this approach road lie between 172 and 174 Victoria Avenue; did you notice as you passed?

The dip in the land seen from here is the valley of the Ock Brook and on the far side of the stream the land rises up to the houses on Cole Lane, north of the by-pass. Both Cole Lane and the avenue are old routeways which followed the ridges and avoided the wet valley bottom. A bit to the right the fields disappear under the housing estates but there is countryside beyond, the wooded slopes of Toots Hill behind Hopwell, the hills of Charnwood Forest and Breedon Hill with its church. There is no mistaking Castle Donington Power Station to the south with its two chimneys and four cooling towers. Ratcliffe-on-Soar Power Station to the south-east can only just be picked out by the top of its very tall chimney poking up above the roof tops.

Walk back down the bridge in the direction of Borrowash. If you walk on the western side you may be lucky enough to see gold finches and even, in winter, a flock of siskins in this little grove of alders which has grown quite well since 1968. It is not so pleasant to see that one small part of this woodland is used as a rubbish tip.

Turning left into Hawthorn Avenue you pass the latest addition to street furniture, a red box set up by the Royal Mail to take the heavy loads which are proving too much for the postmen on foot. Mail vans deliver part of the load to these half-way points for the postmen to pick up on their rounds. In Hawthorn Avenue there are, on the left, two very fine lime trees remaining from Brookfield's garden and on the other side the stumps of four elm trees, the victims of Dutch elm disease. Prior to the road building and the housing estate this was a leafy cart track to the fields down the valley side to the Ock. Now there are the well-planned, well-spaced bungalows of an estate for the elderly and disabled, completed in the early sixties. The streets here have tree names except for Chevin Avenue. The Chevins were a farming family at Church Farm in Ockbrook and they worked these fields.

At the bottom of the slope there is the bridge over the Ock Brook, flowing from the north. Turn right to take the foot path on the near side of the stream. The houses of Hermitage Avenue are just across the water but soon there is grass on both sides. If you are walking in mid-winter you may find it wet underfoot, but not so wet as on the other side of the stream for that slope oozes water continuously in wet weather. The houses are at a slightly higher level and so avoid the worst effects of the underlying clay. The stream swings round in growing meanders, bordered by willow, ash, alder, birch and other trees.

The path now skirts the playing field. The parish council acquired a piece of land at the bottom of Dean's Drive in 1944 and later more was added resulting in this good sized playing area and sports ground, officially opened in 1947. The Parish Council does not own it all but it manages the whole area on behalf of the Erewash Borough Council. This field replaces Rose Acre as a site for great village events, such as the annual Borrowash Gala. The biggest event ever held on the field was surely the Jubilee Carnival in 1977. Organised by the parish council with a great deal of voluntary help this was a great day starting with processions through the villages led by four bands. There were races, gym displays, vintage motor cycles and cars, steam engines, stalls, donkey rides, roundabouts, maypole dancing, fancy dress and a host of other activities. A film of this event was made, a fact which came to light because of a brief reference in the Parish Magazine of February 1978. Where is this film now? It would be of great historical interest.

The end of Deans Drive is on the right; the last building there was in the late 1960s. The footpath from the end of Deans Drive leads to the bridge and now is the time to cross the stream and walk on its eastern bank. On the top of the rise on the left is the Community Centre built in 1970. Through the trees and on the other side of the Ock the Scout hut can be seen.

The stream continues under Kimberley Road from where there is a nice view of the Nottingham Road bridge. Before there was any building at all here this was a large field known as the Bridge Pool Field. Was there a pond in it? The Nottingham Road bridge was rebuilt in 1860, but is the present bridge, made of great gritstone blocks, really as old as that? The name is Barnes' Bridge after the carrier who lived in a cottage by its side. Some say this last stretch of the stream is called the Bar Brook; is this name derived from a careless pronunciation of Barnes? The brook flowing under it can look inoffensive but in the past it has been the cause of deep floods along this stretch of Nottingham Road, hence the sandbags and rocks strengthening the banks.

The walk ends here near a bus stop. Nottingham Road itself must wait for another walk.

WALK 3 STATION ROAD TO PRINCESS DRIVE BY WAY OF THE MANOR

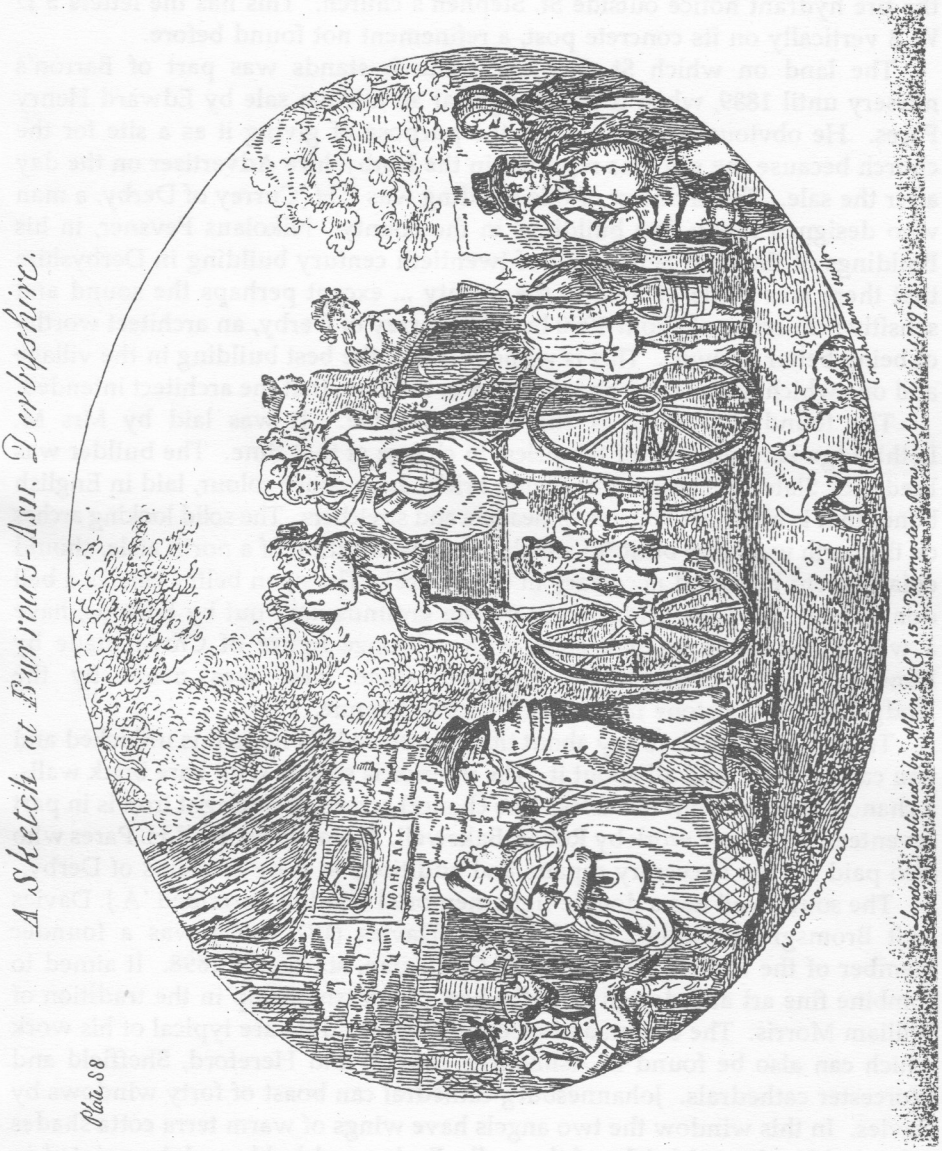
The next walk goes only a short distance overground but a long way back in time. It begins in Station Road, once called Mill Lane and then Station Lane. It has changed a lot since the days when it was "in an insanitary state especially on Sunday mornings" (1900). Was it really worse on Sundays or was it merely that the people going to services at St. Stephen's church did not see it on the other six days of the week?

We start the walk at the Noah's Ark, a solid brick building at least a hundred years old with good use of blue and yellow brick. The earlier Noah's Ark looked very different. A traveller passing through in 1797 wrote, "Burrows Ash is the usual place of refreshment for the occupiers of the Nottingham Coach; I shall therefore present my readers with a temporary stoppage on the road at the sign of the Noah's Ark". This he did and his drawing (engraved by I. Cruikshank) is reproduced here, showing the travellers enjoying the hospitality of the small, thatched inn. It must have been the event of the day for the village which at that time had a mere thirty-three houses.

The Nottingham coach was there because this main road was the Turnpike. Up to the eighteenth century the roads, looked after by the Parish Overseers, had been adequate because the villages were largely self-sufficient. Then came the beginnings of industrial traffic and increasing trade between the growing towns; goods were transported longer distances and so more and better roads were needed. Local people with an interest in building up and maintaining efficient transport and those with an eye for a profitable investment applied for an Act of Parliament granting them the right to take over a stretch of road. They became the trustees, employed surveyors and labourers to surface and drain their road, and erected toll-gates at which they charged the users. The name turnpike came from the iron spikes fitted along the gate tops to deter travellers on horseback from jumping them. The payments at the toll-gates provided the money for the whole exercise. So the care of the main highways came to be vested in these private companies called Turnpike Trusts. Not that the roads were very much better under this system; the surfaces tended to be temporary and a local complained that "the best are incommodious even in summer and scarcely passable in winter".

The turnpikes went out of business after 1888 when county councils took over responsibility for major roads. Yet today, in the 1990s, the building and maintenance of roads by private enterprise is being mooted again. Let no one think it is a new idea.

Past the Noah's Ark is a pleasant row of cottages end-on to the road. Its name, Bellevue, suggests they were built by or for the owners of the Bellevue factory on Draycott Road. The first three were originally three-bedroomed



THE NOAH'S ARK IN 1797

houses, the last one had four bedrooms; it was common practice to build a bigger house at the end of the row for the foreman. The blue enamel name plate on the end house is a nice feature. Another piece of street furniture is the fire hydrant notice outside St. Stephen's church. This has the letters S D W B vertically on its concrete post, a refinement not found before.

The land on which St. Stephen's church stands was part of Barron's nursery until 1889, when it was bought at an auction sale by Edward Henry Pares. He obviously bought it for the purpose of giving it as a site for the church because the gift was reported in the Derbyshire Advertiser on the day after the sale. The architect of this building was P.H. Currey of Derby, a man who designed many fine buildings in the county. Nikolaus Pevsner, in his Buildings of England Series said of twentieth century building in Derbyshire that there was "little of note in the county ... except perhaps the sound and sensitive churches of about 1900 by P.H. Currey of Derby, an architect worthy of being better known". This is without doubt the best building in the village and one which deserves to be preserved in the state that the architect intended.

The foundation stone is still clearly legible. It was laid by Mrs M. Lethbridge-Farmer, wife of the priest in charge at that time. The builder was Frederick Slater of Derby. The facing bricks are a sober colour, laid in English bond, that is alternate courses of headers and stretchers. The solid looking arches on the north wall were built "to enable the easy addition of a north aisle, should enlargement be found necessary in the future". The open belfry carries a bell donated by Mrs Leth-bridge-Farmer. The grounds, laid out by Barrons, have a war memorial of an oak cross with a bronze figure of Christ made by Mowbray's of London. The inscribed stone base was made by the Hodgkinsons, the stone masons of Victoria Avenue.

There is still much to say about this church so let's hope it is unlocked and you can go in to read all about it. The interior is simple with bare brick walls, a chancel and nave but no aisles. The chancel screen of wrought iron is in part seventeenth century work by Robert Bakewell. It was given by E.H. Pares who also paid for the necessary repairs and additions to it by Haslams of Derby.

The south wall has a double-light memorial window inscribed 'A.J. Davies fecit Bromsgrove Guild'. Archibald J. Davies (1877-1953) was a founder member of the Bromsgrove Guild of Craftsmen, started in 1898. It aimed to combine fine art and design with the best of craftsmanship in the tradition of William Morris. The design and colour of this window are typical of his work which can also be found in Ashbourne church, and Hereford, Sheffield and Worcester cathedrals. Johannesburg cathedral can boast of forty windows by Davies. In this window the two angels have wings of warm terra cotta shades enhanced by the red bricks of the wall. Each angel holds a globe painted in cool blues; the globe on the left shows St. George slaying the dragon, but what is the story depicted in the other globe?

The west window, 1930, is in memory of Samuel Theodore Bunning whose house we shall see on Walk 4. There are three saints depicted here; in the centre is St. Stephen enduring stoning. On the left is St. Lawrence who according to tradition suffered a ghastly death by being roasted on a grid. It is more likely that he was in fact beheaded which may be the reason why he can stand here and hold the grid with equanimity. On the right is St. Vincent; there are several saints by the name of Vincent and I am not sure which one this is but possibly the Spanish Vincent of the fourth century who reputedly met the same cruel fate as St. Lawrence. The quatrefoil above carries the shield of the Diocese of Derby which had been formed only two years previously.

Stained glass designed by J.C. Gascoyne of Nottingham was put into the east window in the same year, 1930. There were many other gifts made during the 1930s; some are announced by plaques in the church but others are recorded only in the Vestry Minute Book. Perhaps the congregation took to heart the inscription on the offertory plate, "God loveth a cheerful giver".

One item of furniture provides a problem; this is the old oak chair with 'M C 1657' carved on the back. When Arthur Mee was writing his King's England Series for Derbyshire he reported that St. Stephen's had "two finely carved chairs of the seventeenth century". We know that the Rev. E. Haviland removed one of these, dated 1684, to Ockbrook church, but surely both of them came from the parent church in the first place? Were they brought from Wigston Hospital with the oak screen in the early nineteenth century when Thomas Pares rebuilt the chancel of All Saints'?

This interior is still largely as the architect designed it, which is why it has unity; each feature is in tune with the overall design. To change some parts and to rearrange the layout would destroy the 'wholeness' of the design and belittle the architectural principles on which it is based. It is worthy of preservation, or better still, restoration to its original state.

It is time to go outside and look at the houses. On the same side as the church are detached and semi-detached, well-built houses, larger and more recent than Bellevue Terrace. They were built on plots sold off from Mr Barron's Elvaston Nursery after 1890. The first house on the left is Graham House, three storeys at the back and two at the front; it has notable bays, one rectangular and one angled. Numbers 11 and 15 (no number 13) have smart modillions which are repeated round the tops of the bays.

On the opposite side of the road the houses were similarly suited to the needs of the more prosperous inhabitants of that time. Numbers 4 and 6 were built in 1904. The next three were built in 1911 and 1912. Number 20 has an admirable stone balustrade over the bay. These and all others on this western side were built on plots cut from the fringe of the Manor House grounds. The nurseries and the Manor House were both cashing in on developing Borrowash.

Not much has been said about the buildings in this road because walkers, having 'read their way' up Victoria Avenue, will know what to look for. However, one point must be made about numbers 29 and 31, built by the Cliffords in the 1890s; their dentilations, modillions and string course deserve a prize.

We turn to the right after passing Derwent Villas. Now in Manor Road we can see a similar standard and date of building on its north side. This road, carved out of the grounds of the Manor House, was cut through in 1898. The slope towards the river is made obvious here by the height of the houses on the right compared with that on the left. Restrictions on the developers were laid down by the owners of the Manor House. Nothing was to be built which might interfere with the view from the Manor House, no building could have windows or lights overlooking the Manor garden, there was to be a six foot brick wall at the back of every plot and, of course, "no noxious, noisome, offensive or illegal manufactory, trade, occupation ... or one which should be or become a nuisance to the neighbourhood", no hotel, public house or tavern, no places of entertainment.

Some of the houses on the south of the road, mostly of later dates than those to the north, had their own landing stages on the canal at the bottom of the garden. The odd numbers between five and seventeen were built by the Shardlow Rural District Council and finished in 1938-9. Several of the newest houses in Station Road and Manor Road have been squeezed into the gardens of the original houses, the same infilling that is found elsewhere in Borrowash.

Much more recent are the houses on Manor Park, the first part of this Manor estate to be built; the rest of the estate followed later in the 1960s. Walking along Manor Park with eyes down we can see a few interesting items in the pavement. There is the ELECTRICITY SUPPLY. There is an old fire hydrant sign within one foot of the latest version. There is evidence of services provided by Shardlow Rural District Council, South East Derbyshire Rural District Council (1959-1973), and the South Derbyshire Water Board.

There is an exit from Manor Park by a foot path in front of number 20 and this leads to a pleasant open space with large trees saved from the Manor House garden. The names Dovecote Drive and Cumberland Crescent are significant for the Cumberlands were one of the last families to live in the Manor House which had a dovecote in the grounds.

From where did this house gain the name of Manor House? Its nineteenth century name was Borrowash House. Whether it was ever the site of a genuine manor house, the home of the lord of the manor, is open to question. The land on which it stood was, from the Middle Ages until the time of the enclosure, the common pasture of Ockbrook parish called Horse Pasture. It may be safely assumed that a manor house would not be built here whilst the open field system was in operation. Another doubt is raised by the fact that

the name 'Manor House' seems not to have been used until about 1890. Was that on the whim of an owner with grandiose ideas?

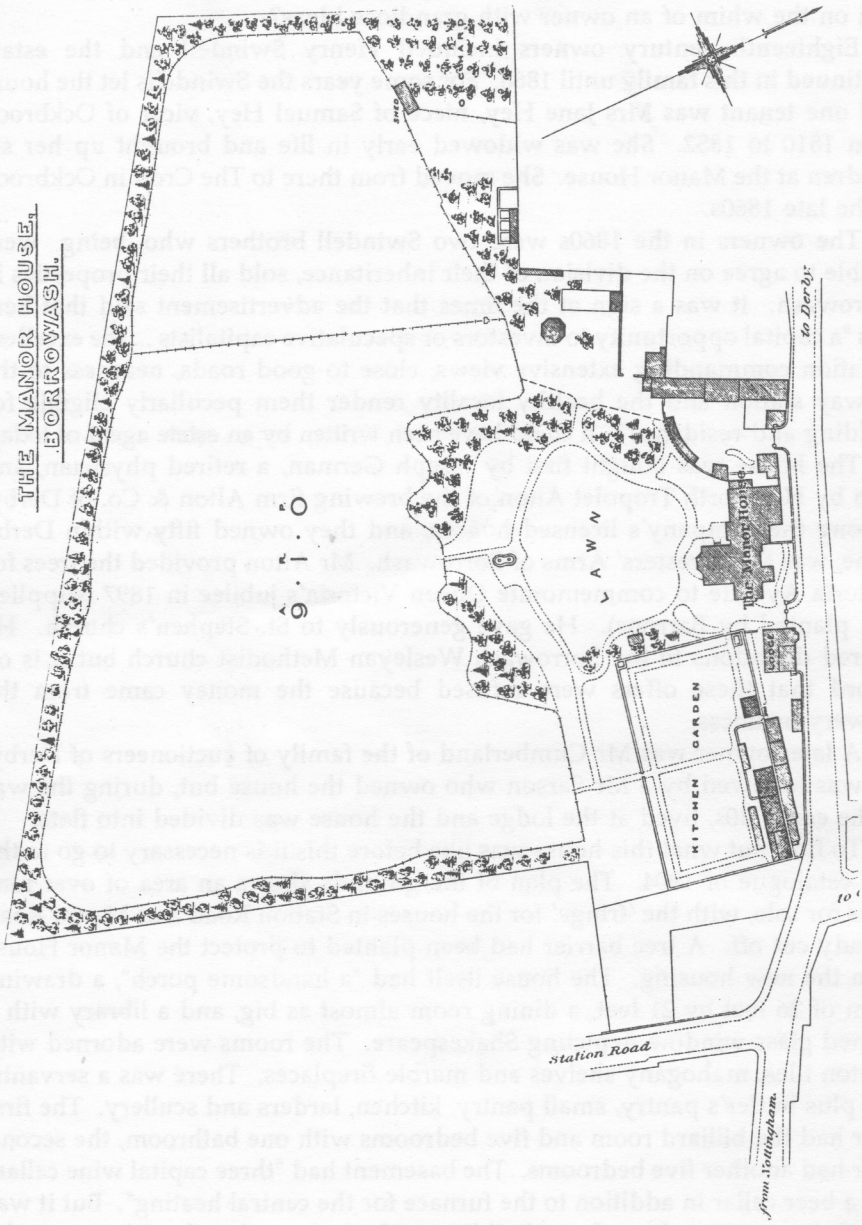
Eighteenth century owners included Henry Swindell and the estate continued in this family until 1868. For some years the Swindells let the house and one tenant was Mrs Jane Hey, niece of Samuel Hey, vicar of Ockbrook from 1810 to 1852. She was widowed early in life and brought up her six children at the Manor House. She moved from there to The Croft in Ockbrook in the late 1860s.

The owners in the 1860s were two Swindell brothers who, being were unable to agree on the division of their inheritance, sold all their properties in Borrowash. It was a sign of the times that the advertisement said that here was "a capital opportunity to investors or speculative capitalists ... the excellent situation commanding extensive views, close to good roads, nearness to the railway station and the healthy locality render them peculiarly eligible for building and residence". It could have been written by an estate agent of today.

The house was bought first by Joseph German, a retired physician, and then by Hepworth Tropolet Alton of the brewing firm Alton & Co. of Derby. Among the company's licensed houses, and they owned fifty within Derby alone, was the Foresters' Arms of Borrowash. Mr Alton provided the trees for Victoria Avenue to commemorate Queen Victoria's jubilee in 1897 (supplied and planted by Barrons). He gave generously to St. Stephen's church. He offered donations to the Borrowash Wesleyan Methodist church but it is on record that these offers were refused because the money came from the brewery business.

A later owner was Mr Cumberland of the family of auctioneers of Derby. He was followed by a Mr Sarson who owned the house but, during the war in the early '40s, lived at the lodge and the house was divided into flats.

To find out what this house was like before this it is necessary to go to the sale catalogue of 1904. The plan of the grounds shows an area of over nine acres for sale, with the 'fringe' for the houses in Station Road and Manor Road already cut off. A tree barrier had been planted to protect the Manor House from the new housing. The house itself had "a handsome porch", a drawing room of 26 feet by 21 feet, a dining room almost as big, and a library with a stained glass window depicting Shakespeare. The rooms were adorned with Minton tiles, mahogany shelves and marble fireplaces. There was a servants' hall plus butler's pantry, small pantry, kitchen, larders and scullery. The first floor had the billiard room and five bedrooms with one bathroom, the second floor had another five bedrooms. The basement had "three capital wine cellars and a beer cellar in addition to the furnace for the central heating". But it was the pleasure grounds and out-buildings which gave this the edge over the other fine houses of Borrowash; two tennis courts, flower beds, shrubberies and a rose garden, a walled kitchen



THE MANOR HOUSE AND GROUNDS, 1904,
FROM THE SALE CATALOGUE

garden with vinery and cucumber house, greenhouses, mushroom house, potting shed, store shed, fruit chamber; water tank with pump, coal shed, stoke hole and heating furnace; a "substantially built engine house with Otto gas engine, dynamos and plant and electric lighting battery chamber over". The essential stabling was there too, a four-stall stable, three loose boxes, two "capital dry carriage houses, saddle room, covered in carriage wash, convenient coachman's chambers", meal house, corn chamber, straw chamber, two dog kennels, a cow shed for five, three piggeries, ornamental poultry house, two hen roosts and runs, duck pen. All is now gone, as that style of self-sufficient living has gone. But not quite all for there are the mature trees which survived the building works, now protected by preservation orders.

So much for the Manor House, but was there ever a Manor of Borrowash? The answer is yes, but there is no evidence (yet) that any Lord of the Manor has ever lived in the village. Several of the lords are named in documents from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries. In 1563 Queen Elizabeth granted the manor of 'Borowashe' to Thomas Stanhope of Elvaston and it remained in the Stanhope family until Olive, the daughter of Sir John Stanhope, took it as part of her dowry on her marriage to Charles Cotton of Beresford Hall. They had a son, another Charles, in 1630. It was this Charles who became famous as a poet and as collaborator with Izaac Walton in the later editions of The Complete Angler. One wonders whether he ever came to Borrowash to enjoy his fishing rights in the Derwent. But the Cottons were heavy spenders and when, in 1685, young Charles inherited the estates, he also inherited the debts. According to local legend, he made use of the caves in Beresford Dale to hide from his creditors, but eventually he was forced to sell his manors and lands at Borrowash and elsewhere. To whom did he sell the manor, and who holds the lordship now?

We have walked through the old Manor House grounds and finished on Derby Road. The land to our right, between us and the unexpected blue of the optician's wall, was used by Mr Sarson for three shops (built by Cliffords) which had to go when the Manor estate was thought of. We turn left, pass the newish houses which stand where there used to be a line of cottages, gable end to the road, to arrive at the Wilmot Arms. This old building was originally two cottages and in the early eighteenth century it was an inn kept by Thomas Holland who called it the Saracen's Head. Then an imposing Georgian house was built fifty yards down the road with the date 1745 carved on the stone lintel. Thomas Holland moved into this and took the licence and the name Saracen's Head with him. It flourished in the days of the stage coach but after the opening of the railway trade declined. So the licence was given up and it became a farm house with the name of Borrowfield House. The licence was taken back to the two cottages of the original inn with the name The Wilmot Arms. The neighbouring Wilmot Hall with its tall brick

walls and lower courses of grit stone was once a malt house.

The stables and coach houses of the Saracen's Head were later converted into a garage run by Mr Grundy, now the Service Garage. In the 1930s the big Borrowfield House was turned into flats, and it was demolished in 1961. It stood where numbers 55 and 57 now stand.

At Princess Drive we turn left. This street dates from the late 1890s; it was named after Princess Mary, born in 1897, the daughter of the future King George V. It was, of course, in Spondon parish then which led to some anomalies between the residents of Princess Drive and their near neighbours, not least in the rates to be paid.

We can compare these houses with those of Station Road. Several were the work of the Brennan and Clifford firms. One of the detached houses on the left, number 20, was for many years the local police station. Behind the house, between the kitchen and the store shed was the lock-up with two cells. This made immediate action by the village bobby much easier than it is today. To be walked from the scene of the crime, or from the doorstep of the Foresters' Arms, straight into the lock-up for the night, not only put an end to the nuisance but was reckoned to be an effective deterrent. Paper work was at a minimum.

The police house and its neighbour number 22 are the oldest on this side of the road, built in 1909. On the opposite side most of the building was done in the first decade of this century but the last four houses are from the second decade. Not to be missed are the patterns in the brickwork of the garden walls of these, numbers 27 to 33, and the colourful glazed tiles in their open porches.

At the end of the street there is a right turn to the most recent extension to Manor Road started in the 1970s, but we turn left. Before reaching Manor Park we pass one of the old lamp posts, now electric but still with arms for the gas fitter's ladder and the maker's name cast on the fluted column.

After turning into Manor Park and walking past number 20 again we can vary the return by taking a different footpath. Bear to the left to find a path by the side of a grass square with the Manor House's legacy of beech and yew trees. Across the grass can be seen part of an old barn wall with a pattern of ventilation holes. The path takes us past a curved brick wall, with its bottom three feet in old narrow bricks and the top three feet in modern bricks. We get a glimpse of the back of the Wilmot Arms and the Wilmot Hall, and emerge again on Derby Road.

31 6 20 35 40 29 21

WALK 4

THE OLD DERBY CANAL TOWARDS DERBY

We go straight down Station Road and do not pause until we get to the top of the river bridge. Here we stop and try to read the plaque set in the parapet on the western side. It can no longer be deciphered in full and it is to be hoped that some Local Authority will replace it before its significance is completely lost. It used to read:-

THIS BRIDGE WAS ERECTED IN THE
YEAR 1898 BY THE TRUSTEES OF
CAVENDISH AND HARRINGTON BRIDGES OUT OF
THE FUNDS ACCUMULATED FROM THE TOLLS
OF CAVENDISH BRIDGE AND WAS HANDED
OVER TO THE DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC
OPENED AUGUST 3rd. 1898
SPENCER COMPTON
6th. DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE

The bridge has three arches over the river and two smaller arches over the mill race, with a total length of 700 yards and is built in blue brick in English bond with stone copings of Stancliffe gritstone from Darley Dale. It took eighteen months to build. The engineer was the county surveyor and the builders were contractors from Manchester. The building was an event which stayed in the memory for in 1962 an elderly inhabitant wrote, "One remembers the strangers from the outer world who came to build the fine brick bridge to replace the old Carr as the toll bridge was named. The Brickies were reputed to lay 1,000 bricks a day and built a structure which stands up to the requirements of modern traffic."

This public bridge replaced the private one which was approached through the grounds of Borrowash mill and was about 70 yards upstream from the present bridge. The Earl of Harrington, owner of the Elvaston estate, gave the land for the new approach road and the Trustees paid £7,000 for the building. The opening ceremony was not quite as described on the plaque for the Duke of Devonshire was kept away by 'parliamentary duties' and in his absence the bridge was declared open by his nephew, Victor Cavendish.

Look over the parapet in the direction of Derby. To our left is Elvaston parish and the district of South Derbyshire. On that side of the river is an embankment which has never been adequate to keep in the flood water. Before Raynesway was built a flooded Derwent meant that the route from Borrowash to Thulston was by way of the bridge in the centre of Derby or over Sawley bridge and through Shardlow.

Straight ahead are the chimneys of a power station begun in 1992 and due to start production in 1995. There has been a power station on this site since 1918. When the old coal-fired station was given up by the East Midlands Electricity Company, Courtaulds took it over for its own power supply. Now Courtaulds are replacing it by one using natural gas which will produce ten times as much electricity as the old station. It will provide power and steam for Courtaulds Chemicals and also feed into the national grid.

On the north side of the river can be seen (if the trees are not in leaf) Riverside House, a Listed Building Grade II. It is a large, rectangular building, the three-storey part of the house on the left is the eighteenth century building and the two-storey part is early nineteenth century. The builders and first owners were the Earls of Harrington. In this century it was for many years owned by the East Midlands Electricity Board and was occupied by its chairman, first John F. Bigland and then Mr (later Sir) C.R. King. King was to become chairman of the Electricity Council. Now it is again in private hands with three dwellings on the site. One of these dwellings was converted by the owner from the stable block about 1991/2 and called Chapel Mews. No evidence has ever been found of a chapel here; perhaps the confusion has arisen because the stable block was built with 'gothic' windows, a common style for estate and farm buildings at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Further to the right is a brick building with metal structures looking like a neat engineering site; this is a small hydro-electric power plant on the mill stream, the experimental work of Lanchester Polytechnic begun in 1986. What cannot be seen now are the large mills which once occupied the site. First there was a corn mill in the twelfth century, then a fulling mill was added. Later the fulling mill was replaced by an iron slitting and rolling mill. In the nineteenth century the site of the corn mill was used for a factory making lace thread leased by the Towles. This building was later to become a flock and bedding mill, converting rags into stuffing for mattresses. Now the mills, the old mill house and the toll house are all gone, demolished in 1965.

Before leaving the bridge look to the east. There you can see the mill race and the river joining together. Notice the wide flood plain and enjoy the view because soon the fields may give way to gravel works.

Now turn back towards Borrowash; the far end of the first water channel you cross marks the site of the cotton mill for this was where the stream emerged from under the building. As you get to the northern end of the bridge notice the entrance to Riverside House on your left, once the road to the mill and old river bridge. A little copse between this entrance and the railway bridge marks the spot where stood seven cottages in a terrace known as Teapot Alley. They were built long before the railway and when the railway line came in the 1830s a bridge had to be made over it and the approach road raised. As a result the fronts of the cottages at one end were about eight feet

below the new road level. Their gardens were on the opposite side of the road, now another small copse.

Once over the railway bridge turn left into the broad grass path which follows the course of the old Derby Canal. The Derby Canal was authorised by an Act of Parliament in 1793. It was to provide a navigable waterway from Derby to the River Trent near Swarkestone with a line going north to Little Eaton and a branch to the east to link it with the Erewash Canal at Sandiacre. This branch passed through Borrowash and was opened to traffic in 1795. Benjamin Outram was the engineer.

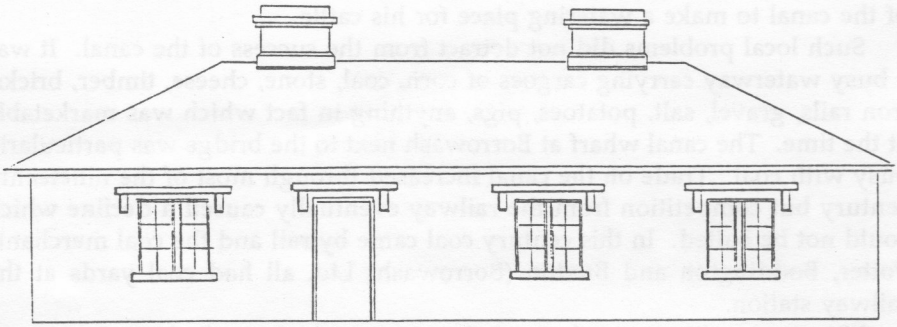
Local land owners sold strips of their land to the Derby Canal Company and those who held out the longest made the greatest profit. Some had a good business making bricks with the clay dug out of the channel. Mr Grundy set up his kilns near to the canal and continued to remove clay for many years, repeatedly causing damage to the banks. Several Borrowash farmers were in trouble for making gates through the quickthorn hedges planted along the boundaries of the company's land. One farmer removed stones from the side of the canal to make a watering place for his cattle.

Such local problems did not detract from the success of the canal. It was a busy waterway carrying cargoes of corn, coal, stone, cheese, timber, bricks, iron rails, gravel, salt, potatoes, pigs, anything in fact which was marketable at the time. The canal wharf at Borrowash next to the bridge was particularly busy with coal. Trade on the canal increased through most of the nineteenth century but competition from the railway eventually caused a decline which could not be halted. In this century coal came by rail and the coal merchants Potter, Boddington and Buxton (Borrowash) Ltd. all had coal yards at the railway station.

More competition came from road transport which resulted in even greater losses for the canal and its last commercial use was in 1945. The Derby Canal Company, wanting to abandon the canal, allowed bridges to fall, bull-dozed some lock houses into the lock basins including that at Borrowash, destroyed lock gates and allowed some tipping into the channel. There were many protest at the loss of the canal but eventually after years of indecision and neglect a Warrant of Abandonment was issued in 1963 and all the land was sold. The Derby Canal Company ceased to exist in 1974. Most of the canal bed was filled in by the Erewash Borough Council to make this walk which links with the Derby City Canal Path. But attitudes and ideas have changed and there is now far more support for the restoration lobby. Derby City Council, once the prime mover for its closure, is keen to re-open so much as does not lie under the new A52. There are plans to restore the canal between Sandiacre and the outskirts of Derby. A new organisation called the Derby and Sandiacre Canal Company is far advanced with its surveys and plans.

Nothing remains of the lock house which stood on the right close to the garden fences at the back of Manor Road. This lock house was built in 1837/8. The earlier lock house had been made useless by the building of the railway and consequently the railway company was held responsible for the new one. The Canal Company felt able to dictate the terms and demanded a house of "sound bricks, well burnt, laid in close joint, with Baltic timber, strong slates secured with wrought iron nails, sills of sound well coloured stone and the interior rendered with lime and hair mortar". Some maintain that the threshold of the house is still there.

DRAWING FOR THE PROPOSED LOCK HOUSE,
BORROWASH LOCK, 1837
From the Contract 1837

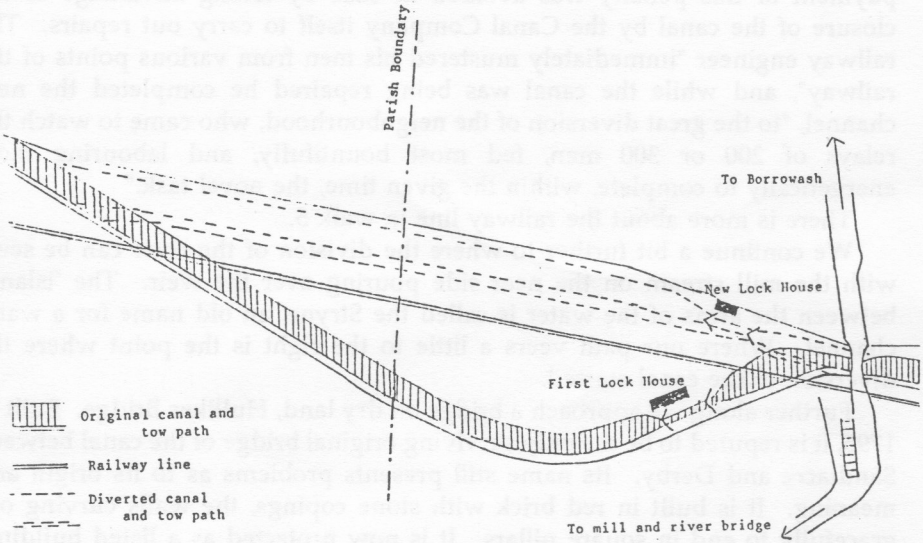


The first lock keeper to live in this house was William Peach. When he died in 1848 his widow was given £5 to quit the house for the new lock keeper William Whyman. Whyman was fortunate enough to have a boiler and grate put in by the Canal Company, and later a damp and cold bedroom was allowed to have a fire place. It seems that the fine exterior was not matched by facilities inside and it was still without main services in the 1950s when it was inhabited by the last lock keeper, Mr Smith.

A bit further and on the far side of the lines can be seen the site of the old Borrowash Railway Station, actually the second station building, opened in 1871. The station closed in 1966; ten years later planning permission was granted for light industry to be carried on there but it was soon empty again and demolished in 1984.

The flat area of the coal yards lies beyond the station site and behind this there is a large bank which continues for a couple of hundred yards. This is the mound which the railway had to cut through. The canal had avoided this mound by taking a large bend to the south but the railway needed to keep straight, so the canal was diverted to the path you are now standing on. About a quarter of a mile of canal was re-cut for the railway line to take its straight course through the mound with the new canal by its side.

PLAN OF THE PROPOSED RAILWAY AT BORROWASH, 1837
From the Contract 1837



The Midland Counties Railway workers making the cutting in 1839 made some surprising discoveries, as reported by a contemporary:-
"About two feet below the surface of the earth, the soil assumed a blackish tinge, and a quantity of bones, evidently burnt, were found ... As the labourers proceeded with their work, whole skeletons of the human body appeared, probably in number about eighty. Through one skull a hole had been broken, and in the interior was found the head of an arrow, made of flint."

There were amulets, brooches, a clay vase, a Roman coin, bones of ox and sheep, boars' tusks and many more items. This was far from a careful archaeological dig but a conclusion was reached that it was the site of a battle between Romans and Britons. Today's archaeologists say this is a burial site of the early bronze age. Where are all these finds now? There is a very nice

early bronze age battle-axe head in the Bateman Collection at Sheffield Museum. It is made of red granite, "carefully blunted edges so it was not intended for cutting and therefore must have been used for war". And the other finds, where are they? For an answer we can only quote from a letter written in 1900, "I have often tried to pick the brains of the oldest inhabitants concerning what was done and found when the railway was made but have never got any definite information except that the workmen took what they found to Derby and it thus disappeared from local ken". All eighty skeletons?

Such great works inevitably meant that navigation on the canal would have to be interrupted and the Derby Canal Company had a penalty clause in the contract entitling them to £2 for every hour the canal was closed. The payment of this penalty was avoided in 1838 by taking advantage of the closure of the canal by the Canal Company itself to carry out repairs. The railway engineer "immediately mustered his men from various points of the railway", and while the canal was being repaired he completed the new channel, "to the great diversion of the neighbourhood, who came to watch the relays of 200 or 300 men, fed most bountifully, and labouring most energetically to complete, within the given time, the novel task."

There is more about the railway line in walk 5.

We continue a bit further to where the division of the river can be seen, with the mill stream on the near side pouring over the weir. The 'island' between the arms of the water is called the Stryne, an old name for a water channel. Where our path veers a little to the right is the point where the diversion of the canal started.

Further along we approach a bridge on dry land, Hulliker Bridge. Built in 1795, it is reputed to be the only surviving original bridge of the canal between Sandiacre and Derby. Its name still presents problems as to its origin and meaning. It is built in red brick with stone copings, the walls curving out gracefully to end in square pillars. It is now protected as a listed building, grade II, because of its historical interest. The stones in the sides show signs of wear by the rubbing of the tow ropes.

The next feature is a bridge over a small stream which marks the boundary of the parish, so it is time to turn and walk back as far as Hulliker Bridge. Go under the bridge and turn left to find the foot path lined with trees leading to Derby Road.

On the last bit of walk there has been a good view of Borrowash House standing with its back to Derby Road. This house was previously known as The Hollies, which caused confusion because another house in Borrowash had the same name. It was also known as number 67 Nottingham Road, which caused further confusion, but was logical because it was then in Spondon parish and obviously this stretch of road goes from Spondon to Nottingham. When the boundary was moved to the west the house was no longer in

Spondon but in Ockbrook parish on the road from Borrowash to Derby; so it is now on Derby Road. These complications are mentioned only to illustrate some of the pitfalls in tracing the history of a single building.

The house was built in three separate stages; one wing in the most ornate Victorian style is easily recognised by the free use of stone, plaster and wood dressings on the facade. The wooden brackets under the eaves provide a motif which can be picked out again below the stone string course and round the windows. The ground floor windows have very impressive mullions. The most recent wing stands to the left of this and is by contrast plain and unadorned.

Prior to 1928 this was the home of Samuel Theodore Bunning. He bought it in 1905 for £2,600, "13 reception rooms and offices, kitchen, scullery, laundry, W. C. on the ground floor, 10 bedrooms, bath room and W.C. on the first and second floors. An old house in excellent repair with new wing built about 1900."

Mr Bunning was a wealthy Leicestershire man who, "though he started life as a railway porter at Kibworth and Wigston, rose to be chairman and managing director of the Beeston Brewery Company and amassed a huge fortune". He was a local benefactor. The Derbyshire Royal Infirmary received many gifts from him. Local children had parties on his lawn and the poor were helped with goods and money. He was buried beside his wife under the front lawn of Borrowash House but a year later the new owner of the house (Samuel's nephew) had the bodies exhumed and moved to Wilne churchyard. The grave there, marked by a large memorial stone, is now sadly neglected and overgrown but the Friends of the Parish Church of St. John, Leicester (the church he attended whilst living at Borrowash), plan to restore and maintain it.

From 1932 to 1935 the house was owned by Albert Ball, a lace manufacturer of Nottingham. He never lived there and the house became "a bit derelict". From 1935 to 1946 it was occupied by Mr B. Bates, a retired farmer and it was at this time that the name was changed from the Hollies to Borrowash House. The Bates made it into a guest house. During the war the house was partly requisitioned for the rehabilitation of officers. Another aspect of the war effort was the good use made of the field for potatoes, cabbage, two cows, two sows in pig, one hundred fowls, four turkeys, all carefully recorded in 1941 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Like the Manor House this large home was not kept up as a private residence; one reason why such gracious living disappeared was the increase in the wages of servants and gardeners, a very necessary increase no doubt but the end result was that the jobs were priced out of the market and alternative employment was (and is) not available. After several years the house became a home for mothers and babies run by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace under

the auspices of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Nottingham. Then it was opened as a refuge by the Derby Queen's Hall Methodist Mission.

As we approach Derby Road the oldest part of Borrowash House can be seen, with its stucco facade and Georgian proportions. At the main road we turn towards Borrowash centre which takes us past the site of the farm house of Meynell Farm (for some years called Field House Farm). As long ago as 1912 the farm house was described as very old, so it is not surprising that it has now gone. The farm house was abandoned when the farmer Mr Sims had a house built on the opposite side of the road. Only the old barn remains, but notice the round window and the honeycomb brickwork for ventilation on the side wall.

This farm was once part of the Harrington estate and later it was owned by B. Sims. He added to his land by renting more than fifty acres from the British Cellulose Company at Spondon (later Celanese and now Courtaulds). There were usually about fifteen heavy horses kept, not all for farm work but for Cellulose, "probably about 50% of their transport department". By the nineteen thirties most of the horses had gone; it was a mixed farm with cattle, sheep, poultry, arable for root crops and cereals in addition to the pasture land. In war time more land was ploughed up by order of the War Agricultural Executive Committee, and all this was done without machinery, with no employed labour, and with only two working horses.

At the other end of the field next to the road is the Roman Catholic Church dedicated to St. Hugh. At the beginning of this century mass for the Roman Catholics of the area was celebrated in the Wilmot Hall. When the building of the Cellulose Company at Spondon brought large numbers of Irish to the area mass was held at Spondon in what was known locally as the 'Spondon Hangar'. Then they transferred to the Crown Club at Spondon, and successively to the Anglers' Arms, the Spondon cinema in Sitwell Street (later the Co-op and now a wool shop), and the Scouts' hut in Oxford Street. For many of these years there was a building fund so that eventually, this new church was opened to serve Ockbrook, Borrowash and Spondon (1958).

The next buildings are two modern houses built, like so many in Borrowash, in the garden of a big Edwardian house. This is Ellerslie, standing at the corner of Princess Drive; the first part of the house was built in 1901 and the rest in 1904 whilst it was the home of Mr Skertchley.

We have now arrived at Princess Drive which, with the remaining stretch of Derby Road, belongs to other walks.

WALK 5

OLD DERBY CANAL TO THE EAST

This walk starts from Station Road near the junction with Manor Road. The modern houses on the left stand on the edge of the fields which were once occupied by the old rope walk and the parish gravel pit. Gravel was needed in large quantities in the nineteenth century to repair the roads and paths. When extraction ceased the fields reverted to rough pasture. The land was let by the church wardens and Mrs Boddington was the last lessee in 1929 when the land was sold as building plots. Building was delayed until flooding was less of a problem for the houses stand lower than the road and not much above canal level.

Where there was once a hump-back bridge to carry the road over the canal, we turn left. There is an Erewash Groundwork sign post indicating Circular Walk Number 13 on the tow path on the south side of the old canal. It has a good surface recently laid by Erewash Borough. This stretch of the former canal is the only bit which still contains water, though not much of it in dry weather.

In a hundred yards we see a building on the far side of the railway line standing above the cutting, the old Station House. The first Borrowash station stood to the right of this house, "inconveniently situated in the middle of a deep cutting. The ascent and descent is by two flights of wooden stairs." It was a temporary building and was closed in 1871 when the new station was built a few hundred yards nearer to Derby (on the site looked at on Walk 4). All of this was the work of the Midland Counties Railway Company, formed in 1836. In 1922 that company was amalgamated with the London Midland and Scottish Railway, the old L.M.S. on which so many Borrowash people earned their living.

As we look down on the lines it seems a good moment to think of the construction of these railways at time when there was nothing but manual labour and horse power. Armies of labourers went wherever there was work to be done, descending on the villages in turn as they cut and embanked their way through the countryside. They were called 'navvies', the name given to that earlier generation of workers who had cut the canals, 'the navigators'. Many of them came from the north of England, Scotland and Ireland.

According to a contemporary writer one thousand men were employed on the line from Derby to Nottingham, about twice the usual number "because that portion of the line was the easiest to complete and because it would bring an immediate return for the capital expenditure". The minutes of the engineers' meetings give a smaller number, about 580. Even this number would swamp the villages such as Borrowash which at that time had only about 130 houses. A reputation for hard drinking, fighting and loose living

preceded these large bands and residents locked up the hen coops and their daughters when they arrived. Some navvies lived with the villagers but many more lived in shacks or huts provided by the contractors, most of them without their families. Their wages were much higher than the general labourers could ever hope for which is why local men were tempted to join them.

The work itself, with so many men and horses toiling on the site, was a spectacle that attracted onlookers; imagine the volume of this cutting being dug out by hand. The debris was 'run out' in wheelbarrows, the runs being made of planks laid up the side of the cutting. "The running is performed by stout young men round the waist of each of whom a strong belt is attached, fastened to which is a rope running up the side of the cutting and turning on a wheel at the top, while to the other end a horse is attached; the horse is led quickly out into the field and thus the man is drawn up the acclivity; the horse being led back the rope is slackened and the man runs down the plank; the barrow is at once rendered unmanageable by any irregularity in the motion of the horse." Such was the scene here one hundred and sixty years ago. The 580 men had the help of more than eighty heavy horses and only after nine months work were they aided by a single locomotive engine. Borrowash cutting is 25 feet deep and nearly a quarter of a mile long. The cutting at Borrowash provided material for embankments in both directions for nearly three miles.

In May 1839 "a trial was made of that portion of the line between this place and Borrowash. The arrival of the Sunbeam engine, with one carriage with some directors and their friends, excited the curiosity of a large concourse of persons. All was found safe and satisfactory."

After this trial run there were special trains to celebrate the opening of the line. At Nottingham station they were sent on their way by the brass band of the 5th. Dragoons, but not before three hundred people had enjoyed "a cold collation" at the Station House. The carriages were divided in three trains, headed by separate engines called the Ariel, Hawk and Sunbeam. The arms of the four counties were painted on the carriages. "Carriages most comfortable in the interior we ever experienced, being fitted up in the first style with lace, and stuffed in the best possible manner ... neither expense nor trouble has been spared by the Directors to render this railway second to none in England." These, of course, were the first class carriages; the others were not so comfortable. A typical train is pictured at the end of this chapter. They must have caused almost as much amazement as the building of the line.

"At every village that was passed, crowds of persons greeted the flying wonder with shouts of applause; and at one place, where all the workmen employed on the line had assembled, a more hearty cheer never rattled forth than issued from those hard-working fellows." Since these men were between

Breaston and Spondon we might assume they lined the cutting at Borrowash. Similar celebrations and scenes of rejoicing were being found all over the country in these decades, everyone recognising the momentous changes which would follow the railway network.

The regular service started on 4 June 1839. "The number of persons which passed between Derby and Nottingham, by railway on Tuesday, the first day, amounted to 500. The multitude which assembled in the evening, at Derby, to witness the arrival and departure of the last train was one of the largest assemblies which ever took place in this town. We have heard various estimates of the numbers, but it is pretty generally agreed that there were from 10 to 15 thousand persons present. Not the slightest cause of alarm happened during the day, and the greatest confidence generally exists in the safety of this mode of travelling."

The first station master to be appointed was a William Hunt, on the recommendation of three of the local gentry, Mr Thomas Pares, Mr Evans, and the Rev. Samuel Hey. Within one month a committee member reported that he had seen Mr Hunt in "a state of intoxication and it appearing on subsequent enquiry that his character is not such as is required to enable him to fulfil the duties of such a situation" he was "forthwith discharged" before he had even started. John Portlock was appointed in his place at a salary of seventeen shillings a week, one suit of uniform a year and the station house rent free.

A later station master was William Richard Boddington who died in 1876 at the age of 42. He was a respected man according to his tombstone, "For his integrity and generous regard to the public convenience universally esteemed and lamented". Boddington's widow, Mary Ann, earned her living first as a "coal and lime merchant" and later, according to a 1902 Directory, as "coal merchant, grocer, confectioner and refreshment rooms, Post and Telegraph Offices". She outlived William by fifty years.

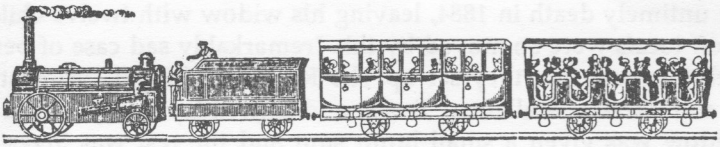
Following Mr Boddington as Station Master came John Frederick Rose. He met an untimely death in 1884, leaving his widow with twelve children. The better-off locals were so moved by this "remarkably sad case of bereavement and helplessness" that they set up The Rose Relief Fund. Almost £270 was raised and Messrs, Mallalieu, Towle and Skertchley administered the fund. The widow was given a small lump sum and the rest was invested on her behalf. She earned her living by nursing which might suggest that the trustees handed out the interest with care.

But to return to the present and the walk. Behind the station house which is now privately owned, is Dilly Meadow, so called because it used to be full of wild daffodils. The nearer water channels are the mill streams and the furthest is the Derwent and the island cut off by these channels is called the Little Stryne.

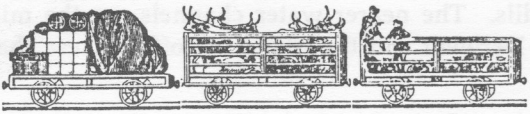
There are many mature trees along this walk, in and by the side of the old water course and some of these will have to be sacrificed when the canal is restored. Through these trees can be seen the new housing estate being built on a former mill site which will be looked at on walk number 8. When complete this estate will come close to the north side of the canal. Some parts of the canal have suffered from these building works, in particular the old lower lock basin. There is not much evidence of this basin now but up to a couple of years ago the lock chamber could be seen with its stone work at the top. Since then the house builders Redrow have made the mistake of breaking up the stone work and filling in the chamber (compensation is promised). Only the large stone blocks lying in the rubble indicate where this lock used to be and you look for these as you get near to the Ock Brook. Standing on the wooden bridge over the Ock you have a clear picture of the bricked-up banks. The top courses of bricks have a slight overhang because this was once a culvert, built to take the stream under the canal.

The path continues across fields where the canal has been completely filled in. A hedge follows the path on the right hand side and on the other side of the hedge the river can be seen taking a large bend to the south. Fields between the path and the river once had the names of Cowslip Meadow, Cowslip Field and Daffodil Meadow. What a pity the reason for these names has gone. The field beyond the cowslip fields had the name Weyacres and the Old English derivation of this word may indicate, according to those who study place names, the site of a heathen temple. Certainly it is an ancient name. On the left is Hooks Farm and the cart track from there once bridged the canal.

This walk comes to an end when you meet the next stream which forms the parish boundary. The return to Borrowash is by the same path.



Engine. Tender. First Class. Second Class.



Luggage. Cattle.

WALK 6

DERBY ROAD RETURN

This walk concentrates on the north side of Derby Road starting at the corner of Victoria Avenue by one of the oldest houses in the village. This cream-painted house started as a symmetrical building and the lower portion on the right with the narrow windows is a later addition. The clue to this is the vertical jointing of the brickwork between the two parts, almost, but not quite, obscured by the paint. The wide side entrance leads to the outbuildings shown on the map with Walk 1.

Next to this opening is number 8 which used to be a pair of cottages with twin doors in the centre. Number 10 is better known to locals as Sycamore Farm. About eighty years ago this was a small holding of thirteen acres and behind the house with its five bedrooms could be found the dairy, calf house, cow house, two pig sties, chop house, trap shed and coal house. At that time they were said to be "in very bad repair". It looks different now. Farmer Frank Cotton was followed by Robert Archer of the Ockbrook farming family; he sold up in 1978.

To the west of this all the old buildings have gone and imagination is needed to picture it as it used to be. The house where the Matchetts lived came next. The previous occupant was Samuel Kerry. It was in his time that the walls of the cottage were raised to make another storey and the thatch was replaced by tiles, but these upper rooms were still low and 'half-attics'. Such modernization did not change Sammy who would sit at the cottage door in his blue smock frock. He was the local herbalist, well patronised because he was so much cheaper than the doctor. This building has now been replaced by a bungalow.

Then there was the school, a gaunt brick building built in 1839 by the vicar Samuel Hey at his own expense. It was enlarged several times but could not be brought up to mid-twentieth century standards. It continued in use for many years after it had been condemned and when the school children moved out it was used by the Ockash Youth Club, the nursery school and the library. Then the building of a new community centre for Borrowash left the old school without tenants and it was sold in 1973 for £2,500. The site is now used for two houses set well back because a thirty foot building line was kept to allow for road widening. The next three houses are also well back from the road; when these were planned the parish Council was rather concerned about the visual effect of having the garages placed so prominently to the front of the houses.

These three modern houses are on the site of a terrace of four old cottages and their gardens. They were owned by the Swindells from the end of the eighteenth century and four generations of the Dyche family, shoemakers and

farmers, were tenants. By the mid-nineteenth century the Dyche family rented the crofts adjacent to the house and raised cattle and pigs. They made cheese and an upstairs room was the cheese storage room, which was the common practice. By the 1860s the brothers John and Joseph Dyche lived in two of these cottages and Jabez, the son of John, rented Sycamore Farm. Then, in 1868, the Swindells sold all this property. Jabez bought the four cottages, sold as one lot, so that his aged parents could continue to live there, but he could not afford to buy the farm as well. In 1881 Jabez made good use of the plot of land at the western end of the four cottages. He employed the builder John Weston of Derby to clear the "old cow shed, piggeries, butcher's shop etc" and to build "two cottages, butcher's shop and room over shop". The two cottages remain, now numbered 24 and 26.

But Jabez had to leave Sycamore Farm in 1868 and seek work in Derby. He became a warder at Derby jail. He had two sons, William who became a teacher and eventually a headmaster in Cardiff, and John who lived locally. His daughter was Amy who was assistant shop keeper to her widowed mother Hannah in the little shop in the end cottage. Amy later took over and kept the shop for many years before her death in 1937. William returned to Borrowash frequently for holidays and here he spent time on his hobby of painting. He painted many pictures of Borrowash scenes between 1900 and 1910, not only of streets and the canal, but interiors of the shop and his mother's home. These water colours are a pleasure to look at and they also tell us a lot about Borrowash almost a hundred years ago. They can be seen at Derby City Art Gallery but a request must be made in advance for they are kept in store and are not on display.

As we walk in the Derby direction we pass more buildings which are on William's paintings. He painted the next two red brick cottages but all we can see is part of a wall with door and windows bricked up. Then comes Ivy House, still surviving although in William's time it was "in poor repair, cellar flooded, and damp course perished". It was built in the eighteenth century but had a new brick front in the early nineteenth, topped by a low parapet with stone copings. It is a listed building, Grade II.

Number 34 was built by the local builder Frederick Greasley as his home. Greasley moved from Stapleford to Ockbrook in 1845 and after building Long Row and other houses he moved to Borrowash. He and his son Frank carried on the business from the builder's yard at the side of his home. He retired in 1889 and John Clifford and his son who had been building in the parish for a few years took over the yard. At a later date Clifford rented the house and eventually bought it. Next to the house is a long narrow building. This was the office in which all the ledgers, accounts, and letters of that long-serving building family were written in a copper-plate hand, documents now stored at the Derbyshire Record Office. A few years ago the office and store were

converted into a house; the name Clifford House is still there although it is no longer occupied. More interesting than the name, perhaps, are the two commemorative blue bricks built into the wall near the corner,

KING GEORGE V 1910.

When William Dyche was painting there stood a remarkable building beyond Clifford's. It was known then as 'The Hall' and later came to be called Oak Cottage. It was, even in his day, very dilapidated. The tax inspectors of 1912 thought it was then about eight hundred years old. It was a thatched building, timber-framed with brick in-filling above a broad stone plinth. It had two rooms upstairs and two rooms down, but the outside appearance suggested it had been built as a 'hall', a large open room with no upper floor. Its age, its style and its traditional name of Borrowash Hall, all lead to a suspicion that this could have been the Borrowash Manor House. It was no ordinary domestic building of the twelfth century, for they did not survive for more than a generation or two. Manor houses of this age have survived when lived in, extended, strengthened or rebuilt. Without a resident Lord of the Manor it would not be enlarged or rebuilt, but would stand to house the bailiff or the tenant farmer and as the years passed, the farm labourer. We shall never know whether the suspicion is correct.

On the site of the old hall is a new house set well back. Next is the road side building once the joinery business of Ernest Brennan and now the workshop of the Goldmark Label Company. Then comes a terrace of three brick houses, a very pleasing trio with matching Victorian faces until one of them had a face lift. Two are left with the warm brick, stone or plaster dressings, windows of proper proportions and fanlights. Fanlights were very necessary as the only source of light in the halls. These three houses were built soon after 1870 as high quality small houses but, of course, at that date they had no sanitation and no piped water. The pumps and the wash houses were in the back gardens. Their superiority over the Victoria Avenue cottages was reflected in the sale price of £275 each in 1907.

We are now outside the Manor Medical Centre. This stands on the site of four old cottages behind which were another six small, poor dwellings known as Grundy's Square. Behind Grundy's Square was a long narrow croft called Clifford's Yard, the builder's store yard.

From now on the buildings on the north side of the road are mostly twentieth century. Some retain old front garden walls, brick with triangular copings. Numbers 64 and 66 are the work of the Draycott architect F.S. Antliff, mentioned before as architect of the chapel in Victoria Avenue. Number 66 was for Farmer Sims when he left the old farm house opposite and the bungalow was for Antliff himself. We stay on this north side of the road because the other side has no pavement. Before long we are passing Borrowash House, the other side of which was seen on Walk 4. The gateway

still has its old iron lantern bracket. Facing the road is a high wall which is the back of the original laundry, coach house, harness room, stable and Lodge in that order. The bricks have been laid in a bonding not found elsewhere in Borrowash, each course consisting of three stretchers followed by one header, known as Flemish Garden Wall bond.

A few yards beyond the old carriage entrance, at the road side, is a triangular cast iron boundary post (Listed Grade II). It is an early nineteenth century, cast iron post. The vertical back has THE COUNTY OF DERBY, the sloping panel has PARISH BOUNDARY and the two faces below are inscribed SPONDON PARISH and OCKBROOK PARISH. It used to stand at the roadside between the Wilmot Hall and Grundy's garage but it had to be moved when the boundary was changed to its present position along the stream. The stream is flowing from the north, its course can be picked out by the line of bushes and trees at the field edge and here it disappears under the road.

The houses which can be seen beyond this (view them from here because it is hardly worth the nasty road walk to get a closer look) are in Spondon parish, but were in the past regarded as being part of the village of Borrowash. The first house is the Falcon's Nest, a boarding house, tea room and refreshment house for cyclists in the 1920s. In the 1930s it was advertising its advantage of being "three minutes from the Celanese".

There is no alternative but to retrace our steps to Borrowash centre. A detour can be made along the signed footpath across the field now on our left. It is a large field, the hedges which once divided into four smaller fields have been long gone. The distant traffic and a glimpse of a petrol station make it obvious that it leads towards the by-pass and it is the by-pass which prevents us walking the whole path, past the site of the demolished Borrowood Farm, into Spondon. If the weather has been wet the walk will be heavy going for it is a clay soil. To the west the field slopes down towards the stream on the boundary. About a mile in front, to the north, is the Moravian Church. On the right are the backs of the houses of Victoria Avenue, but there is little else to see. It is possible to emerge on to the by-pass, turn right, and walk for a couple of hundred yards along the grass verge to meet up with Victoria Avenue but this is not recommended. It is a bit more peaceful to walk back along Derby Road.

WALK 7

CHAPELS, GRAVES AND ELM TREES

This walk begins on the car park by Presto in the corner nearest to the electricity sub-station. Look first at the old brick work at the back of the dress shop. There you will see the narrow bricks, indicating building at least two hundred years old with bricks made locally. These early bricks were about 2½ inches deep and 8½ inches long. They were uneven and varied in size and colour because they were hand made and often fired in temporary kilns on the building sites. Uneven bricks resulted in uneven and thick joints so old walls often have an untidy look. In 1784 a tax was imposed on bricks and brick makers very sensibly increased the size of the bricks so that fewer were needed and the tax bill was less. So later walls have larger bricks, and as the railways brought the possibility of transporting bricks long distances, large scale manufacture developed and bricks became standardised and evenly made. Local variations in colour began to disappear. It is easy to see that these walls have been built up in stages at different times.

Notice too the vertical ventilation slits in the walls, now filled in, indicating that this building started off as a barn, possibly joined on to the living quarters.

This is a good spot for looking at other bits of brick work. Several different bondings can be seen from here. Bonding is the regular arrangement of bricks in each course, some laid lengthways called stretchers and some end-on, called headers. The courses of the rounded front of the Noah's Ark are laid in Flemish bond, that is each course consists of alternate stretchers and headers. There are nearby walls with courses of headers alternating with courses of stretchers, called English bond. Look across Derby Road at the two newest shops built in the 1930s (by Cliffords), where the fronts are neatly decorated with courses of bricks standing on end, called a soldier course. A variety of bonds has been seen on the houses in Victoria Avenue.

The sub-station occupies part of the site of a rather fine, two-storey, brick house of the eighteenth century. It had a central wooden porch with sash windows each side, and chimneys at the gable ends. For many years the house and the croft behind were owned by Sydney Sussex College, Cambridge, and the house was known as Cambridge House. Mr Rushton bought the property in 1911. Demolition came in the 1960s but it is good to know that someone in the village is preserving the old name plate of the house.

Step back so that you can see over the wall behind the dress shop and you will see a brick gable topped with a horizontal stone, a detail popular in the seventeenth century. This is in a back yard called The Court and listed by Erewash Borough Council as a group of buildings of local interest worthy of being "protected and enhanced". To the left is the back of the old chapel of 1826 and the single-storey school rooms built a few years later.

Take the narrow pedestrian exit from the car park to the left of the old chapel which will bring you to Chapel Street. The street sign at the end names it Chapel Row but its original name was Chapel Street and the 'row' was the line of eighteen two-bedroomed cottages. They had very small back yards but each had a fair sized garden on the opposite side of Chapel Street stretching into what is now Nursery Close. Both cottages and chapel were built on land owned by Messrs. Towle of the cotton mill.

From Chapel Street the imposing front of the old chapel can be seen. In the eighteenth century the Methodists of Borrowash were included first in the Derby Circuit and then in the Derby King Street Circuit. Borrowash folk walked to Derby for services and preachers came out from there to minister to the Borrowash congregation. These preachers would walk to the villages, often take two or more services in neighbouring villages "followed by the long walk home with the prospect of rising at five o'clock the next morning in order to be ready for possibly twelve hours work at their respective trades".

The first Methodist meetings were held in a building at the bottom of Ockbrook Lane, registered as a chapel in 1806 and described as being "lately erected for the worship of Almighty God in the village of Borrowash in the parish of Hockbrook, the property of Mark Porter". When a bigger chapel was needed the congregation subscribed for this building which opened in 1826. There was no organ and we are fortunate to know from the reminiscences of William Dyche how that problem was solved. "The first harmonium to be used in Borrowash chapel was the property of my father. It used to be carried to the chapel on Saturday night and brought back on Monday morning. My father learnt to play it at the services. He was taught music by Miss Beasley, a Moravian lady of Ockbrook of whom, and of whose kindness, he always spoke with great respect".

A local Methodist recently described this chapel as "plain and unimpressive" but with its neat decoration, recessed arches and stone dressings, it might be fairer to call it well-proportioned and imposing. This building was the Borrowash Wesleyan Chapel until the new one on Nottingham Road was opened in 1900. After that it served for a short time as Sunday Schools and then had more mundane uses. In 1915 motor cycle bodies were made there and part of it later in the war was used for making baskets to hold the shells for transporting them to the front. Basket making for more peaceful uses continued for many years under Mr Massey. More recently it has been used by joiners and a blacksmith. This year (1995) it is up for sale at £70,000, "a viable joinery business plus income from upper floors and workshop of £5,000 per annum gross, capable of improvement".

Turn the corner at the new Methodist Manse, built in 1993, and you will be in the cul-de-sac of Nursery Close, a street made up in 1970 and so named because it is on part of the land of Barron's Nursery Gardens. In one corner

of the close is a wooden gate with padlock which leads to the old grave yard. (Apply well in advance to the secretary of the Ockbrook Parish Council for the loan of the key.) This cemetery once had a wide entrance road from Chapel Street but that was lost when the new houses were built. It was in 1867 that a group of Methodists joined together to provide and administer this burial ground and for it they bought half an acre of a field called Chapel Close from Henry Neville Towle of Nottingham. The opening of the ground in 1868 is commemorated by the obelisk in the centre:-

THIS CEMETERY CONSTRUCTED BY THE
VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS OF MORE THAN SIXTY
INHABITANTS OF BORROWASH AND THEIR FRIENDS
WAS COMPLETED AND DEDICATED TO GOD
FOR THE PURPOSE OF CHRISTIAN BURIAL
A D 1868

All the memorial inscriptions on the grave stones have been recorded by the Ockbrook Parish Council and a copy of this record is available in the Borrowash Library. The last burial was in 1948 by which time there were 638 graves. Since 1976 Ockbrook Parish Council has been the sole trustee of the ground by agreement with the Charity Commissioners. The council had to report in 1979 that their efforts to improve it and make it a garden of remembrance were hampered by locals who used it as a rubbish tip and for other "less mentionable pursuits". This no doubt explains why it has to be locked.

It is a quiet and peaceful place, shaded by yew trees and such stones as can be seen recall many of the names of old Borrowash families. Iron railings surround the grave of Frederick Greasley who died in 1888. There are several of the Dyche family, the Wintertons, members of the Stone family, James Juffs the baker, the family of John Barron, and the wheelwright and smith Bernard Moore. There is evidence, too, of the 1914 war and the following 'flu epidemic which killed so many children:-

PTE ARTHUR SMITH EAST KENTS
KILLED IN FRANCE JUNE 16 1917 aged 26
ALSO OF REGINALD SMITH DIED DEC 24 1918 AGED 9 YEARS
AND IVY SMITH DIED JAN 2 1919 AGED 11 YEARS
THE BELOVED CHILDREN OF WILLIAM AND MARY SMITH

It is necessary to retrace your steps back to Chapel Street in the direction of Nottingham Road. The first buildings on your left are the Methodist school rooms behind the 'new' chapel. The foundation stone records that it was laid

in March 1913 by Miss E. M. Smith. When these school rooms were first opened they were said to be "undoubtedly one of the most compact and up-to-date series of Sunday School premises that have been erected", "a large well-lighted central hall, adaptable wings for class rooms, ladies' parlour, an infant and guild room, two class rooms, kitchen etc", "heated throughout with hot water pipes and radiators and open fires for classes during the week". The cost was £1,200 including furnishing and lighting, "incandescent gas in handsome aluminium lamps". The official opening came in the same year as the laying of the foundation stone, which reflects great credit on the builders, J.S. Clifford & Sons of Borrowash. The architect was Alfred Woore of Fritchley.

These school rooms were built after the 'new' chapel which we see next. The need for a new building at the end of the last century was expressed in terms which are often heard today, "the old church although of substantial appearance was antiquated and did not meet the needs of the congregation". Mr Woolley of Allestree gave the land for the building in 1897 and efforts to raise £2,000 started at once. The foundation stones were laid in June 1899 and some of the names are still legible on the stones. About this time Borrowash had its first resident Methodist minister, so no longer was the congregation dependent on the circuit ministers.

Like the old chapel this is a handsome brick building, with stone finials, moulded bricks, finely designed hinges and a nice line in ecclesiastical ventilation bricks. The contemporary press report said,

"The new structure, plans for which have already been prepared by Mr John Wills will be of brick with stone dressings. The design is Gothic and comprises a central nave, with transepts towards the north end. A prominent feature of the south wall will be a handsome mullioned window, surmounted by tracery of fifteenth century style. The contemporary spire, which, when completed, will give a dignified and imposing effect to the church, will not at present be carried out, the contract providing for its erection at a future time for a stipulated sum."

When, in 1949, the Primitive Methodist congregations united with the Wesleyan Methodists it was this chapel which became the Methodist Church of Borrowash.

By the side of the chapel gate is a remnant of earlier times, a single, large, stone gate post. I wonder what happened to the other one? This wide drive once led to the bakery of Mr Juffs and to his four-stall stable and piggery. James Juffs was a public spirited man who served on the parish council and even stood for election to the County Council in opposition to Mr E.H. Pares of Hopwell Hall. As was usual for the time, the election campaign of 1897 was reported in great detail, especially in the Long Eaton Advertiser which came out strongly in favour of Mr Juffs, "the Liberal fighting for the working man". Mr Pares was elected.

The post office is now well established here on this north side of the road having wandered quite a bit in its long history from Nottingham Road to Derby Road and from the north side to the south side and back again. Borrowash had a receiving office for mail as early as 1839. This opened within a few weeks of the start of the railway service between Derby and Nottingham which put Borrowash station on the post route. The present post box dates from the reign of George VI and it bears the same maker's name as the Victorian box in the Victoria Avenue.

Your walk takes you past the pre-1900 houses, the last of which used to be J.W. Cotton's with his workshop, paint store and cart shed behind. A garage now occupies the site of the buildings belonging to Mr Moore, his conservatory, coal house, wheelwright's shop, cart shed, stable and smithy.

Beyond the five bungalows there is a turn into Belmont Drive (built 1974 to 1977) and if you did not get into the cemetery before, now is the time to make a detour. You turn left into Belmont Drive and bear left until you can see the railings round the cemetery. There is no entrance to it here but there is a good view of the obelisk and the trees.

Back to the main road, go past more bungalows which are on the site of Barrons' offices and shop, and over Barnes Bridge to walk up Barron's Way. This will be walked again so there is no need to pause and you turn left in front of the shops, right by the side of them into Briar Close and up the slope as far as the welcome open space. There is a hint as to the age of Briar Close in the water stop-cocks. At the top of the slope is Briar Close Home, the local residential home. It was started in 1969 and was planned in four small units, "single-storey style to merge with surrounding building development and to blend into the local community instead of being regarded in any way as institutions". The planners insisted on five separate small scale boilers for the heating "each with its own flue no higher than most domestic chimneys ... to avoid the visual disadvantage of one tall chimney". The result of all this is a group of buildings so discreet that it is all too easy to forget the planning which went into it.

This is quite a good spot from which to get a view over the village. Many land marks, buildings and streets can be picked out from here.

Returning to Balmoral Road you turn right and find the name changed to Kimberley Road. After crossing the Ock yet again, you turn left into Elm Street. Elm Street started out as an access road from Victoria Avenue to Barron's Nursery and it is claimed that Barrons created Elm Street by selling building plots along this drive. Long before the nurseries there were gravel pits here, remembered with pleasure by Jabez Dyche when looking back on his childhood,

"Nearer to our village were two disused gravel pits which had filled with water, in summer green, thick and slimy, and where in early spring frogs might be seen and heard in abundance. On one side of each pit there was a

magnificent old elm tree and on the other some beautiful hawthorn bushes which bore the finest hips anywhere and which could only be got at when the pit was frozen over. How we did crowd on the ice, as soon as it would bear, to get at them and fill our pockets with the beautiful fruit. A wagtail built its nest on one side of the pit but we could never get at it during the summer though we could see the birds build their nest and rear their young."

Then the land was taken over for the nursery gardens. Barrons let part of this land for allotments from 1917. Thirty years later Barrons wanted the land back but they were persuaded to sell it to the council for £330. There are fewer allotment gardens than at first because they have been nibbled away for a housing plots. Even so Borrowash is well provided for, having about 10 acres of allotments which, in proportion to the size of the population, is almost double the national average.

The oldest buildings in Elm Street are those nearest to Victoria Avenue on the south side. Building started soon after 1880 and went on into the 1890s. Like most of the houses of this standard they were built for investment and let at what we would now think of as very low rents. Their design was a common one of that time. The front door opened directly into the front room which led in turn to the back rooms. All had narrow frontages and the kitchen, about half the width of the main rooms of the house, partly enclosed a small yard by the back door. This plan came to be known as 'tunnel building'. The kitchen would be built with sink, perhaps an iron range and a copper, but there was no piped water into the houses when these were built. All had outbuildings at the bottom of the garden for coal, ashes and privies.

At the end of the street, at each corner, there stands a shop, built as a matching pair about 1900 by a builder with an eye for detail. The moulded brick of the string course is matched by the pediment over the door; the stone courses are lined up with the windows; 'pillasters' of brick follow up the vertical lines of the shop windows. The timber round the shop window leads up to large carved wooden brackets. The modern canopies of Beau Belles rather detract from the dignity of the fronts but the carpet shop retains its integrity. Long may such delightful shop fronts last. Don't miss the stained glass window in the first floor on the Elm Street side of Beau Belles.

The earlier shops in these premises, Mr Haddock's grocery on the left and Mrs A.E. Moore's hardware on the right, supplied the more basic needs of the locals. But Mrs Moore's was far more than a hardware shop. She was "Dealer in glass china, earthenware, clocks, watches. Also boots and shoes, all kinds of hardware, fancy ware, etc. Crockery let out on hire for whist drives, tea parties, etc. Noted for carpets rugs and matting. Goods not in stock obtained at the shortest notice. Gas mantles and fittings. Picture framing a speciality. Receiving office for Long Eaton Laundry. Agent for Derwent Bedding Company and for Long's Dyers and Cleaners." Who needed a supermarket?

WALK 8

INDUSTRIAL BORROWASH

We start at Brook Road which within living memory was a rough, unlit track, even though it led to busy industrial sites. On the way down we will concentrate on the right side. At the corner on the right there used to be two cottages, the home and shop of the market gardener, Stephen Sims. The cottages, built about 1760, were backed by a dairy, green houses and potting sheds. Sims was followed by a nurseryman, Eric Cholerton. Now all the site of garden, small holding and cottage is under the houses of Mill Close and Towle Close. The houses are new but the names are historical. It was in 1974 that the Parish Council approved the name of Towle Close "in order to perpetuate the name of a great benefactor of this parish".

The new houses come to an end where the road bridges the Ock Brook and here on the right is an old house which has had the name Rock House since it was built in the 1840s. In 1847 it was advertised for sale as:-

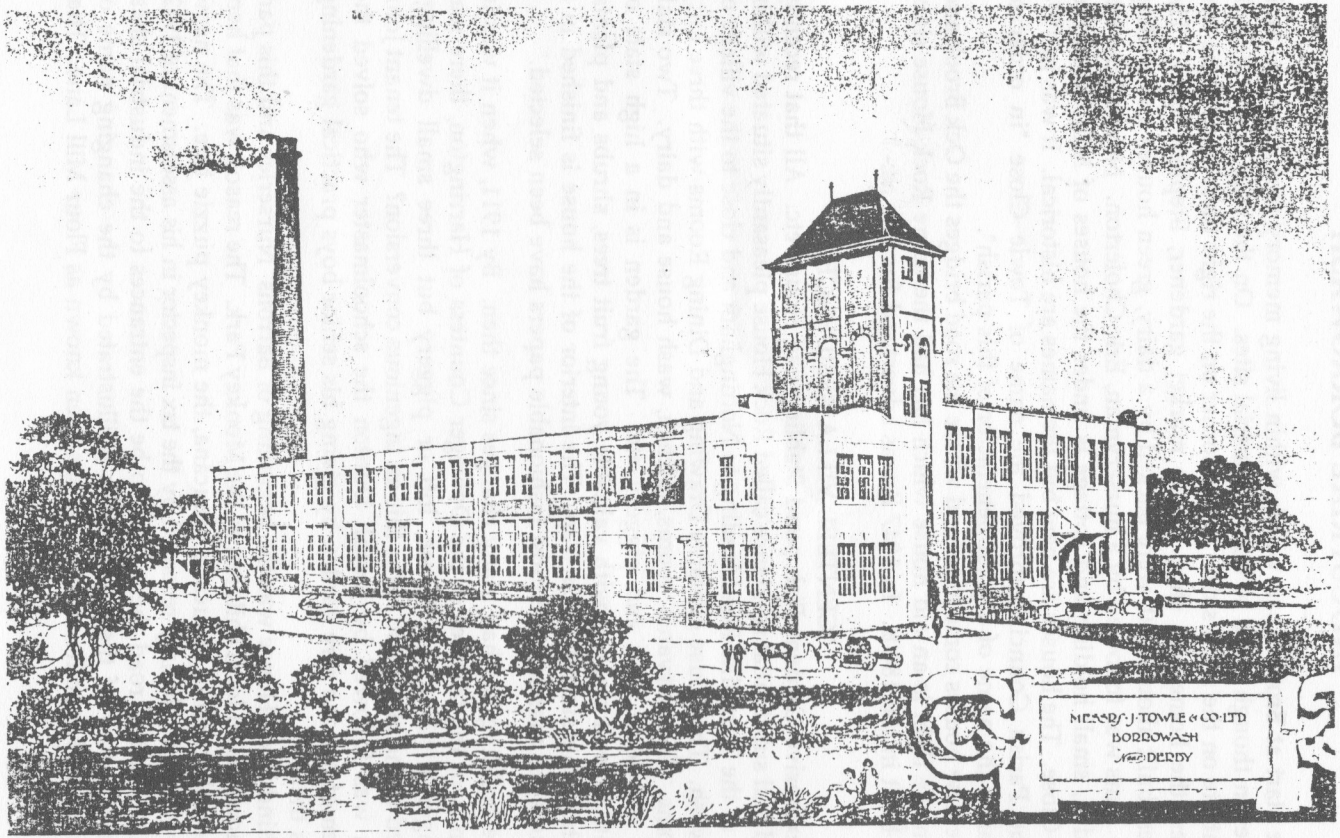
"GENTEEL VILLA RESIDENCE

With extensive Gardens Fish pond Stabling Gig House etc. All that recently erected and substantial residence called Rock House pleasantly situated within a field of the Turnpike Road leading to Nottingham and close to the village of Borrowash. The house contains Drawing and Dining Rooms with three lofty bedrooms. Two servants' rooms, kitchen, wash house and dairy. Two stall stable, gig house, loft and piggery etc. The garden is in a high state of cultivation, well stocked with valuable young fruit trees, shrubs and plants. The whole measuring 1a. 2r. 12p. The interior of the house is finished in a very superior manner, the most fashionable papers have been selected."

The building has had many changes since then. By 1911, when it was in the hands of the trustees of the Dowager Countess of Harrington, there was no longer a stable, gig house, loft or piggery but three small dwellings attached to the big house. Was this an ingenious conversion? The tenant John Barron was followed by Joseph Dunton the schoolmaster who solved the problem of his one acre garden by giving his senior boys practical gardening lessons there.

Behind Rock House was the beginning of Barrons' Nurseries and this part was known to all local children as the Monkey Park. The reason was that here was the collection of araucaria araucana, the monkey puzzle tree. The name Monkey Park is solemnly recorded by the tax inspector in his assessment of 1912.

On this bit of road there used to be the entrances to the industrial sites. The long history of these industries is illustrated by the changing name of Brook Road. For some of its life it has been known as Flour Mill Lane. That



TOWLES' MILL 1904

was in the days of John Lancashire who had a steam engine at his flour mill in the eighteen fifties. There was also the Ock Brook for power with the mill pond giving a head of water of thirteen feet. Later the site of the flour mill became a blacking mill and the road changed its name to Blacklead Lane. Nothing remains of this building.

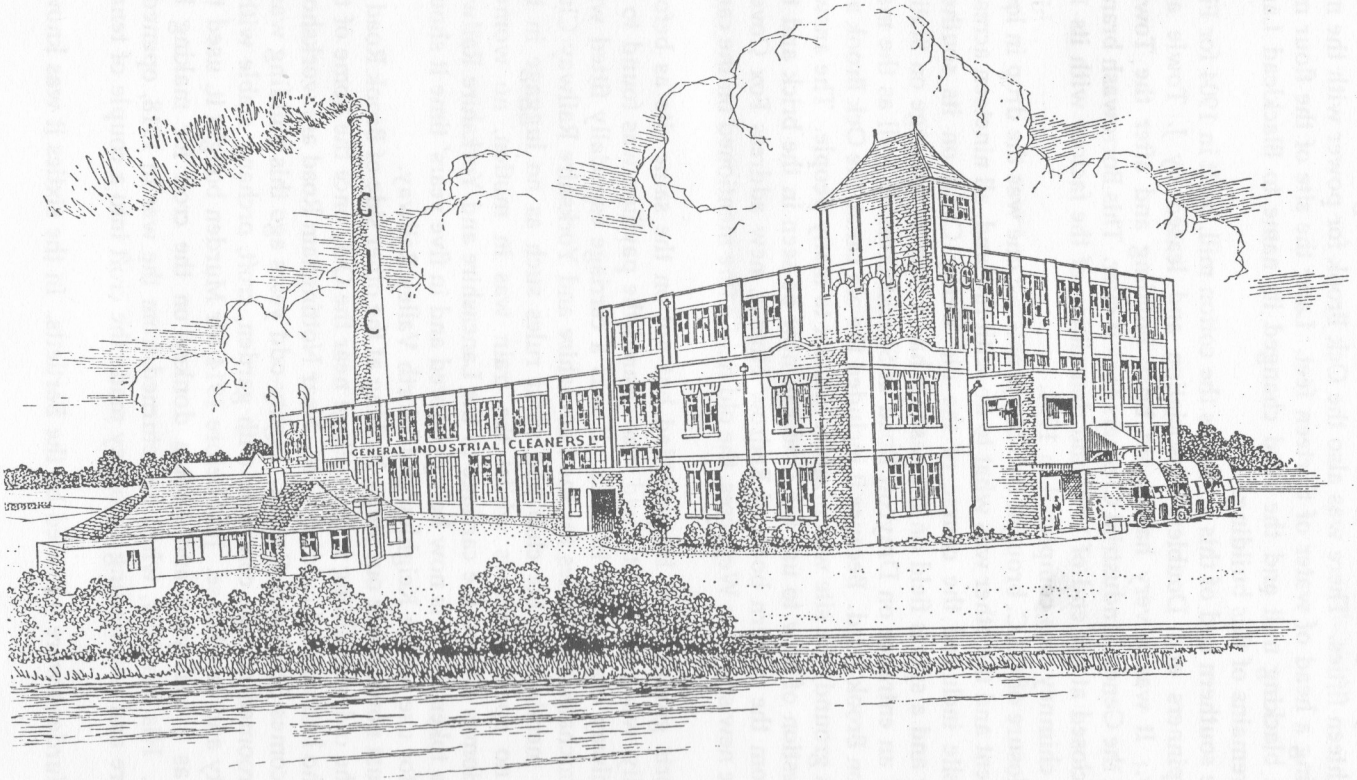
At the southern end of this area was the cotton mill, built in 1904 for Fine Cotton Spinners and Doublers Association and leased by J. Towle and Company. It was a very handsome brick building and after the Towles vacated it the General Industrial Cleaners took it over. This Borrowash branch of G.I.C. closed at the end of 1990 and demolition of the factory with its 110 foot high chimney was completed in 1994.

The closure of G.I.C. brought two big problems; one was the drop in local employment and the other was what to do with the land, all nineteen acres of it. The site included the course of the old Derby Canal on its southern boundary and a sports field on the east. It had a narrow frontage on Station Road and an entrance on Draycott Road at Shacklecross as well as the main entrance on Brook Road. Because it included the old canal, the Ock Brook and the sports ground, the site was of great interest to many people. The answer to the question of how to use the land can now be seen in the brick and tile houses from the pattern book of Redrow Homes, new address Fox Covert. One of the new streets is Weyacres, the old field name mentioned on the canal walk.

A sports ground is to be provided but not on the same site as before. Incidentally, when the sports field was cleared the pavilion was found to be an old railway coach built in 1912. It was a carriage especially fitted with leather armchairs and tables for the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Club. The forty members of the club had strict rules such as no luggage in the carriage, no open windows whilst the train was in motion, no women. Redrow Homes offered the carriage to the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Trust for a token £1. It is now being restored and in five years' time it should be ready for use on the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway.

We must now retrace our steps, looking at the other side of Brook Road as we go. The oldest building is the cottage near the Ock, once the home of the Illsleys who had a small holding here. Near Nottingham Road are workshops and then comes Brookside Garage. Eighty-odd years ago this building was a three-bedroomed cottage complete with garden, croft, orchard, stable with a loft, pig sty and cart house. Just before 1914 Mr Murden bought it, used the property as a coal yard and kept a donkey on the croft for making his deliveries. His son Billy, when he returned from the war in 1918, opened a garage here and not needing a donkey made the croft into a couple of tennis courts.

The Murdens were followed by the Bartletts. In the sixties it was known



GENERAL INDUSTRIAL CLEANERS LIMITED, ABOUT 1950

as the Blue Star Garage and narrowly escaped demolition and 'development'. The newish external timbers might give the impression that this is a building pretending to be older than it is. There can be no doubt that it is well over two hundred years old and it does not need the imitation timbering on its walls.

Next to the garage is the detached villa called the Elms, built about 1900 and after this is an older block which started out as three cottages. The first of these cottages was a shop and its neat window remains although the shop closed many years ago. By the side of these cottages we need to turn right into the twitchell. In a few yards the path veers a little to the left so that it is in line with the Nottingham Road we have just left and Draycott Road which we shall soon join. This footpath is on the course of the old Roman road. The present road, instead of following the Roman road, winds through Shacklecross with two right-angled bends which we can see at the end of the twitchell. Most likely this winding course was adopted after the Enclosure Award of 1773 made new field boundaries.

We are now in the middle of the Shacklecross area which grew as a separate hamlet and as recently as a generation age had its own postal address. Letters were sent to Shacklecross, near Derby, not to Borrowash.

The name indicates that there was here a wayside cross with a shackle or fetter attached. It could have been a pillory or perhaps a place of penance for pilgrims. There is a well-founded theory that this stone cross was taken to Wilne Church and there it was shortened and hollowed out to make the font. The font has six panels, each carved with a dragon or birds and it would have been a very fine, substantial cross. Round the base of the font are shapes, "twelve bold characters", which were thought to be hieroglyphs. Experts tried hard to decipher the language and the meaning. Then it was discovered that the stone had been turned upside down to make the font and the hieroglyphs were no more than the feet of six men whose bodies had been cut away. Such are the hazards of research.

Between the two big bends on the Draycott Road is Stone's Row, nine cottages said to have been built to house the canal workers. The front gardens are small, but each cottage had another garden by the side of the footpath we have just walked along; perhaps you noticed the waste land on the right near to the bend in the twitchell? That is the remnant of some of the gardens and others have been built on. A garden was a necessity when wages were so low that every household had to grow vegetables and rear pigs in order to feed the family. The nearest house of Stone's Row is slightly larger than the others, so when all were bought by Jack Stone in 1907 he had to pay £81 for this one; the others he bought for £60 each. They were 2-up and 2-down houses with five privies between them but before condemning the speculator who put them up for his low standards and his avarice, consider what they replaced. Writers of

the eighteenth century describe the labourers' dwellings as shacks of mud and straw with broken glass embedded in the walls to provide the only light when the door was shut; often a home was single room cabin with an earth floor. It is with these hovels that Shacklecross cottages and others like them should be compared, not with the twentieth century suburban comfort, then the nineteenth century builders would not be so roundly and so unjustly condemned for providing houses of this standard. They generally built well, which is why these cottages still stand and are still worth the improvements and additions made by the careful owners of today.

After walking in the Draycott direction for a few yards look back and try to imagine the road much narrower with an unmade surface like a cart track, and the twitchell without its high, well-trimmed privet hedges. That was the situation in 1931 when the parish council put in a request for a sign pointing to Nottingham Road because "strangers run their cars into the entrance to the twitchell thinking the road goes straight on".

Now much newer houses appear, Shacklecross Close on the right and the Spinney on the left. The Spinney is a cul-de-sac built where there once stood a large house called Derwent House, built in 1874 and sold it as a building site in 1976. The trees are the clue that these houses are built in a Victorian garden.

The small factory, Ashfield Screen Printing Limited, looks a bit out of place in this residential road and some tree planting would reduce the impact of its plain face.

Newbold Avenue has the oldest council houses in Borrowash. They were built in 1929 mainly to rehouse the families in Grundy's Square and Chapel Street. It is a wide street and the houses have generous front gardens. The uniformity gives a bit of dignity to the buildings which are simple in outline and well proportioned.

We now come to Hooks Farm. There is a new farm house but the old one and several of the old farm buildings remain, the walls of the barn and loft having honeycomb brickwork for ventilation. Notice the old plan of a long building with the barn at one end and the house at the other, both under the same roof. Hooks Farm was glebe land until bought by Faire Brothers Limited. In 1934 or '35 Mr T.C. Naylor became the tenant. The war-time agricultural inspectors sympathised with Mr Naylor because his land was so wet and they reported that "there will be no improvement until the flooding is alleviated". Nevertheless the inspectors persuaded him to plough up another ten acres for wheat and oats.

On the north side are more allotments. Providing allotment gardens has been one of the duties of parish councils since they first came into being as a result of the Local Government Act of 1894. The council rented this patch of ground stretching from Draycott Road to Nottingham Road from the Earl of

Harrington. In 1914 a well was sunk here and a pump set up; I wonder if it is still there? When the chance to buy the Shacklecross allotments came in 1979 the council bought them for £200.

Next to the allotments is the most recent development; the houses having rather fussy facades with yellow brick arches above the doors and windows. The reason for this can be found in the next group of buildings in Quillings Way, known as Washington Cottages. These are workers' houses dating from the mid-nineteenth century and now restored. They have yellow brick arches over doors and windows following the shape of the fanlights and the round-topped windows. This is the architectural detail which has been picked out by the modern builder and copied in the new houses. But the new yellow brick arches are incongruous for they surmount rectangular windows; they are neither structurally necessary nor ornamental. The original cottages have some fine decorative brick work; the paths are neatly tiled up to the blue brick steps and the boot scrapers remain.

Before turning into Quillings Way we continue along the Draycott Road to the end of the wall which marks the boundary of a former factory, alongside a stream. The stream is followed by the parish boundary but the only indication of this is the road sign. Draycott Road has now become Derby Road.

Now we return to Quillings Way, passing the site of the mill again. The first factory here was the Bellevue Works of the mid-nineteenth century, making elastic web and tapes. It became part of the Derby firm of Peters, then Peters and Bartsch. When the textile market began to flag parts of the building were used for making lace and bicycles. Soon after 1900 this building was demolished to make way for the Washington Mills built for the Leicester firm of Faire Brothers, manufacturers of all kinds of elastic fabrics. It was a single storey factory with a two storey office block. The management boasted that "the conditions under which our elastics are produced are as perfect as human thought and skill can evolve".

After Faires the building was taken over by Lilley's Narrow Fabrics producing tapes, elastics and webbing. Lilleys was later absorbed into the Rykneld Mills of Derby, and was closed down in 1986. The building and the 120 foot chimney were demolished in 1987, providing the site for this housing estate.

We turn, at last, into Quillings Way, a name chosen as a reminder of the process of the bobbin winding that went on in the mills. The side road on the right is also aptly named, Weavers' Close. Oak Tree Close on the left leads to houses built on the site of Bellevue House, for some years the home of Eugene Bartsch, born in Prussia, a naturalised Englishman and a partner in the firm. Bellevue was similar in standard, size and in its garden to Derwent House, and went for the same reason, that several houses could be built where only one

stood before.

From the end of Quillings Way there is a pedestrian entrance to Faires Close and facing us, on the far side of Ballards Way behind a grassy mound, is a large factory. This is the only textile firm remaining in Borrowash, a branch of the lace manufacturers, Birkins. The firm of Birkins originated in Nottingham, founded by Richard Birkin in 1827. They were pioneers in the manufacture of lace, adapting the old lace machines and developing new ones. In the 1960s the firm merged with three other Nottingham firms and had factory sites in Nottingham and Draycott. When there was no room for further expansion at Draycott this four and a half acre site was bought for a new factory which started working in 1978. The firm now claims to be the most modern lace factory in Europe with "the most intricate lace in the world made at Borrowash". Debfors have taken over but the Birkins branch continues to trade under its own name.

One part of this site houses a unique collection of lace designs and samples dating back to 1850. Apart from their historical value these are used by the design teams, as a source of ideas. It is a priceless collection well protected against theft, fire and atmospheric damage in its specially constructed sealed unit.

Turning left into Ballards Way takes us alongside the allotments to Nottingham Road through the entrance which names the estate The Laurels. A right turn takes us towards Bains Drive. This is so-called because it once led to the Bains-Everett factory, the flock and mattress makers who had moved here from their mills on the Derwent. The flock mill closed in 1977 and it was their factory and land which Birkins purchased. Bains Drive still leads to factory gates and no further.

We have finished on a stretch of Nottingham Road which will be examined on Walk 11, so the bus stop here may be a convenient point to end.

WALK 9

BARRON'S WAY, BALMORAL ROAD AND BACK AGAIN

We start this walk at Barron's Way. The Barrons' have been mentioned so often it is time to find out who they were. William Barron came from Scotland in 1830 to lay out the gardens at Elvaston Castle for the fourth Earl of Harrington. His work can still be seen. He made the lake with islands and an Italian garden, he erected hot houses, he planted mature trees and brought in tons of rock to create his landscapes. His employer guarded the gardens jealously and is reputed to have said, "If the Queen comes, Barron, show her round, but admit no-one else". After the death of the fourth earl Barron continued to work for the Harringtons but he also rented a plot of land on the estate for his own nursery stock (rent £20 p.a.). In 1862 he bought and rented land in Borrowash and started the business which he called the Elvaston Nurseries. He was soon joined by his son and the business continued in the family for two more generations.

This area of their nurseries round the present Barron's Way was landscaped with pools, fountains, borders, and winding paths through rose gardens. It was a sight worth travelling to see and when the gardens were opened on Bank holidays in aid of charities, the railway company put on special trains from Derby in addition to the regular service. But it has already been noted how the area of the nursery was reduced by selling for building and by the 1930s there remained only about 80 acres and some of this was rented land.

During the second war some of their land was given over to food crops though more than 50 acres remained under hardy nursery stock. Whereas other farms in Borrowash had very few employed workers and little or no machinery, Barrons had 59 workers on their pay roll. They were the only land holders to have tractors (they had two), and they also had three stationary engines. They were certainly the best equipped farmers, but even so their grading by the War Agricultural Executive Committee was only 'B'. The reason given for this was that "farming was secondary to horticulture". After the war the great standing of the nursery, nationally and internationally, seemed not to return and the firm had a chequered history until it closed in 1959.

Evidence of the work of Barrons can be seen beyond the boundaries of Borrowash and Elvaston; they landscaped Broomfield Hall, Locko Park, Matlock Bath Pavillion and gardens, Abbey Park in Leicester, Kew Gardens, and public parks in innumerable towns in England. They also had many commissions abroad and the diary of a local man illustrates this. Joe Bromilow, born and brought up in Borrowash, was in the Royal Air Force and in 1943 he was stationed in North Africa. He kept a record of his travels and

wrote, "We were marching through Tunis ... sticking our chests out and feeling really 'somebody' when I saw on my left a park, and a bit further on we came to the park gates where there was a big sign,

THIS PARK WAS LAID OUT BY BARRONS NURSERIES
BORROWASH, ENGLAND

I was able to turn to the chap next to me and say, 'That's my home town and I went to school with Tony Barron,' which was quite true."

On the grass verge at the road junction are three silver birches. Are these the trees planted to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth? The older trees on the verge towards the Nag's Head are reputed to be those planted for the Coronation of George V. Barron's Way has one large building, the Foresters, a replacement for the Foresters' Arms which went from the bottom of Victoria Avenue. Naming public houses after occupations is a long established custom. The inn sign shows the woodcutters, and above it are the horn, dagger and quiver of arrows of the huntsman. When the pub opened in 1967 there were plans to give it a 'garden theme'; the large conservatory was to be filled with exotic plants and the outside walls were to have honeysuckle and virginia creeper. There was even mention of magnolias. But the walls are still bare and there is nothing to soften the rather forbidding exterior.

We are now on the edge of the modern part of Borrowash with its newer houses, both private and council. This time we turn right into Balmoral Road and before long the entrance to Ockbrook Cemetery is seen on our left, with fine stone pillars and iron gates made in the 1920s. These gates used to stand by the side of the Nag's Head on Nottingham Road and a long drive led to the cemetery up the side of Barrons' nursery land. When that land was sold for housing the cemetery entrance was moved to the newly made Balmoral Road.

This parish cemetery is the 'new' one. Traditionally people were buried in church graveyards but these became inadequate with the increased population of the nineteenth century. The problem was solved by allowing local authorities to administer their own graveyards. It was not until 1920 that Ockbrook Parish Council needed to take action. The Rev. Donald Haseler (vicar of Ockbrook 1917-24), warned the council that there was little room left in the churchyard and that "it would be catastrophic if we had nowhere to bury our dead", which seems something of an understatement. This plot of land was bought from William Barron for £350. Barrons laid out the roads and paths and planted the trees. It is worth going in to see the fine lime trees lining the east and north boundaries. There are mature hollies and yew and young poplars and oak. Originally there were three 'classes' of burials; the first class graves were those nearest to the paths but were there any other differences?

Leaving the cemetery we need to turn left to the end of Balmoral Road and then take the narrow pedestrian exit to the right to Nottingham Road. This is

the last remaining part of an ancient way from Shacklecross to Ockbrook Church. The greater part of the route now follows the pavements of the new streets and only this portion remains as a footpath. Borrowash windmill was situated near this path. In 1830 the mill was sold at an auction held at the Saracen's Head with a "dwelling house or tenement and garden pleasantly situated in Borrowash by the turnpike road". Nothing remains of the mill but the dwelling house is the cottage on your right as you emerge from the path. The cottage has modern timbers on its walls but there really is an old cottage underneath them. Older residents claim it once had a stone staircase on the outside and that a barn stood behind it. The age of the building is best indicated by the garden walls with their brick-on-edge coping.

A fairly recent occupier of this house was a Mr Bradbury who kept his horse in the field opposite. This field is now under houses built about 1970 and the former owner is remembered in the name of the close. A bit to the left of Bradbury close are two of the older dwellings of Borrowash. That on the left was for many years the home of John Stone, owner of Stone's Row in Draycott Road.

Continue along Nottingham Road in the direction of Borrowash centre. The first bit of street furniture is a letter box of a type known as a lamp box. This is because the first of this kind were fixed to lamp posts and the name has stuck.

The newsagent's shop is a fairly new building replacing a single storey lock-up shop. The former shop started off as a carpenter's workshop, then it was used at various times by a butcher, a cobbler, a tripe seller, a hairdresser and last of all by Mr Gilliver the newsagent.

The houses which we see next on the bend are in two blocks, the first of four houses and then a group of five. There are slight differences between the two groups in building details. The boot scrapers are still there, but half buried because the road has been built up.

The raising of the road has had a more unfortunate effect on the opposite side where the houses are now up to three feet below pavement level. The difference between the two sides is caused by the general slope of the ground towards the south. There are ten houses in the terrace facing us on the opposite side of the road, once known as Gill's Row. Not all were built at the same time; the one on the right is the youngest, built on the site of a lean to which served as a butcher's shop. Then the next three were added on to the original six, as is clearly seen by the continuous vertical joint between their brickwork. The roofs also show evidence of the different dates of building.

There is still one important building on the north side of the road, the Nag's head. Two cottages are now part of this pub which is the youngest in Borrowash, gaining its first full licence in 1889. This ends our look at this bit of Nottingham Road and it is only a short distance back to Barron's Way.

WALK 10

ROUND THE SQUARE, GORDON ROAD AND CENTRAL AVENUE

This walk starts at the bus stop near the post office on Nottingham Road, opposite the end of Gordon Road. At this stop is one of the smart green litter bins put out by the Erewash Borough Council. Several have been passed on the previous walks but not inspected. On the front is a golden imprint of the 'achievement' of Erewash Borough, that is the shield, supporters and crest usually spoken of as the coat of arms. The motto of the borough is hard to read but should be PER SAPIENTIUM CONSTANTIAMQUE VICTORIA, that is TRIUMPH THROUGH WISDOM AND ENDEAVOUR. Amongst the symbols in this coat of arms there are many allusions to the situation of Erewash and to its history. On the shield there are three wavy diagonal bands to indicate the rivers Trent, Derwent and Erewash. There is the chevron (a broad band of an upturned V-shape) which is also found on the arms of Long Eaton and South-East Derbyshire. The flaming torch is in the Long Eaton arms and the stag is found in the arms of both Nottingham and Derby. There are symbols to represent the industries of the borough, such as the hanks of yarn for textiles, the rings of Mars for the iron and steel industry and a lace collar on the stag. The ancient abbey at Dale is indicated by the fleur-de-lys in the chevron, the emblem of St. Mary. The many parishes of the borough are represented by the ears of wheat in the sheaf at the top of the shield. Full details of the arms can be found in the Erewash Borough Official Guide.

The problem of litter is not a new one. In 1928 Mrs Eking of Ockbrook, a kind benefactor to both villages, paid for posters to be printed and displayed about the streets. They were not in the pictorial, eye-catching style we are familiar with today, but a sober request, REFRAIN FROM THROWING LITTER. The first litter bins were put up in the parish in 1932 by Shardlow Rural District Council.

The view down Gordon Road is pretty much as it has been for about a hundred years. It was a road of late Victorian and Edwardian villas for the respectable and comfortably-off, the new professional inhabitants who could commute so easily to Derby and Nottingham by rail. The road was laid out in the 1880s and had the name New Street. Soon after 1890 the name was changed to Gordon Road, a name chosen to commemorate General Gordon. George Charles Gordon is best remembered as the general who, trying to rescue an isolated garrison in the Sudan, was cut off in Khartoum; there he withstood a siege for ten months and lost his life when the town fell in 1885. His other services to the country are not so well known as they deserve to be. He joined the Royal Engineers in 1852 and served in the Crimea. In 1860 he was sent to China, arriving with the rank of captain and leaving after five

years as Lieutenant-Colonel; but that was not his only title for the Emperor of China gave him the rank of Field Marshal and dubbed him 'Commander-in-Chief of the Emperor's Ever Victorious Army'. All this is recalled by a street name, and perhaps we should remember that we still have enough British men and women of principal and valour to commemorate without recourse to the names of the obscure, the foreign or the temporarily fashionable.

Most of the houses were built between 1890 and 1910 on land sold by Barrons which explains why there are so many choice, mature trees in the gardens. Built at a time when the materials were no longer limited to those produced locally and when builders borrowed ideas from a variety of architectural sources, there are lots of details of these houses to be appreciated. Machine-made decorative bricks and tiles, ridge tiles, copings and facing bricks were easily available by rail. Those who have done the walks numbered 1 to 9 will be so accustomed to looking for bonding, dentilation, arches and chimneys that little needs to be said about these. There are however some features which must not be missed, such as the brickwork on the gable end of number 7, the dentils of number 9 and the chimney stacks and chimney pots of 14 and 16. Many houses have been enlarged since they were first built and these plain and utilitarian additions can be seen at the back of the more decorative fronts.

The six semi-detached on the left date from about 1898 which is the year the road was surfaced. These were owned by members of the Bowring family of Derby and let. It is interesting that none of these houses on the left was owner-occupied for at least their first twenty years. The speculators were as interested in this standard of housing as in the cottages in Elm Street.

Further down and still on the left there are some side porches with very unusual woodwork. And what about that very impressive string course, is it a grape vine? On the right number 24 is unusual with bays on two sides, arches of yellow bricks over the windows and fretted barge boards on the gable.

At the junction with Central Avenue is a pair of semi-detached, with half-timbered gables (unkindly called stock-broker Tudor). They are more exuberant than the sober faces of Gordon Road. Central Avenue is so called because it follows the central east to west working road of the nursery gardens. It was developed later than Gordon Road and today it shows a mixture of houses mostly from 1900 to the 1980s, some obviously built in the large gardens of the earlier villas. The oldest, number 2, called The Cottage (formerly Lee Cottage), was built about 1890. It has a miniature spire, a not uncommon feature of Victorian villas.

A younger house is number 8, Derwent House, and here can be seen the most recent in-filling (1994). The garden of Derwent House has provided a long drive lined with mature birches and ornamental cherries and the sites for three bungalows, a development to be called St. Stephen's Close. The agent's

description is of "walls of Old English Russet bricks and roofs of Norfolk pantiles". One has a large oak in the garden and one an old yew, both looking as though they were well grown even before Mr Barron started work.

With the northward bend in Central Avenue we continue with the twentieth century. The first cul-de-sacs off Central Avenue until recently backed on to a factory site but they have had that view changed for one of a housing estate. Maylands leads towards the Ock Brook, on the other side of which are the houses of the Brook Road development. On the left is a neat row of eleven 'modern town houses' with open plan front gardens.

You need now to turn left into Nottingham Road; this road has been walked but the south side has not yet been examined. First is the new Royal Close of five bungalows still (1995) in the building after a start in 1990. Then comes Elvaston House, number 36. This large house was the home of one of the Barron family when the land tax surveyors examined it in 1912 and made an impressive list of outbuildings. There were five stables with lofts, cow sheds, a calf shed, three pig styes, stone barns, loose boxes, two cart sheds, three harness rooms, engine room and so on.

To the right of the house stands a large gate post of grit stone, skilfully dressed. Surely it once had a twin for this was the end of one of the nursery's working roads. Where did they come from and where is the missing one? (It is not a bit like the gate post near to the post office on the opposite side of the road.) The large grit stones marking the edges of the gardens of this and the next few houses are a puzzle. Was all this stone from the abbey at Dale?

Number 22 is an old cottage, its bricks now covered by stucco but the original beams are still to be seen inside. This cottage was already here in 1826 and probably for many years before that; it was then owned by Mark Porter who lived next door in Elvaston House. Behind the cottage Mr Porter had his rope walk which stretched from Elvaston House to the Noah's Ark. Now this land is occupied by the courts of the Ockbrook and Borrowash Lawn Tennis Club. The club started in 1919 by renting land for four grass courts. In less than ten years they were able to buy the area of the four courts and more land was purchased in the 1950s.

Boughton House is most impressive with its simple symmetrical face, the decorative iron work on the ridge and other details.

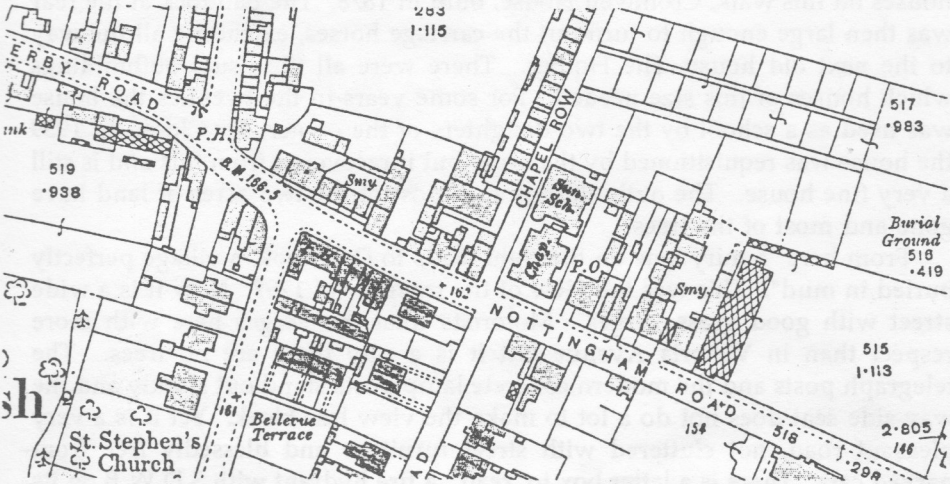
Last of all is the building standing at the corner of Gordon Road. This started off as a four-bedroomed house with two lock-up shops both with windows facing the main road. Only the right hand shop window remains but there is evidence of the left hand one in the rather poor brickwork which surrounds the present small window.

So the walk has brought us back to the starting point, but we can continue a bit further. The shops on the north side of Nottingham Road, to our right, are old cottages that have had shop fronts built on to them. These shops have

housed a variety of businesses. Early this century when they were owned by Mr Burge the butcher, the corner shop at the end of Chapel Street was Harrison's fish and chip shop. One was the barber's shop kept by E.J. James and next to him was the surgery of Mr Donald the dentist. There was James the newsagent who published picture postcards of scenes of Borrowash; he later moved to the south side of Derby Road. One shop housed the very first electrical store in the village. Between the two groups of shops is the narrow entrance to the Court, referred to in Walk 7.

On the south side of the road beyond Bellevue cottages is the gable end of another line of shops built about 1890, in response to the increase in house building going on then. Many years ago the nearest shop was Shaw's. After 1915 Mr Shaw's business flourished because of the influx of workers who were here, employed by McAlpine to build the factory of the British Cellulose Company at Spondon. Later Mr Shaw's shop became Chester's, 'The Bacon Shop', and this was followed by Mills, a high class grocer with a range of goods that would be the envy of a supermarket. The only sign of these earlier businesses is on the gable wall facing us. Here can still be seen, if only faintly, the silhouette of the cloaked and hatted figure advertising Sandeman's Port and Sherry.

So we are back at the Noah's Ark and the end of this walk.



From the 1913 Ordnance Survey Map

WALK 11

THE COLE LANE AND PRIORWAY TRIANGLE

This is a walk of contrasts, from late nineteenth century gracious living to mid-twentieth century mass-production housing. Although it is called a triangular walk we are going to start a bit to the east on Nottingham Road, by the stream which forms the parish boundary. This is the same stream that we stood by on Walk 8 and may have met on Walk 5. Brook Close House takes its name from the field in which it was built. The field of about four acres was bought for building prior to 1900 for £300, then this fine house was built by Cliffords at a cost of £1350, with a stable, loose box, coach house and green house.

Next is the entrance to Mr Collier's nursery, followed by four pleasant faced houses. They were built about 1890 with external cavity walls fourteen inches thick, unusual for that time. Their names are interesting, Havelock, Wellington, Campbell and Raglan. Whoever named them knew his military history. Lt.-Col. William Havelock, Sir Colin Campbell and the Baron Raglan all served in India and in the Peninsular War. It was in the Spanish peninsula that they worked closely with the Duke of Wellington in the fight against Napoleon and then they fought under Wellington again at Waterloo. In that battle Raglan lost his arm and is reputed to have said, "Don't carry away that arm till I have taken off my ring". The 'raglan sleeve', cut up to the neckline with no shoulder seam, takes its name from him. But the important thing is that we have here this reminder of four men to whom we are indebted.

Facing these, on the north side of Nottingham Road is one of the oldest houses on this walk, Cromwell House, built in 1878. The paddock at the rear was then large enough to turn out the carriage horses, extending all the way to the next old house, The Hollies. There were all the usual outbuildings which houses of this size needed. For some years in the twenties the house was used as a school by the two daughters of the owner, Mr Close. In 1939 the house was requisitioned by the army but it recovered from this and is still a very fine house. The outbuildings and most of the two acres of land have gone and most of the trees.

From here "a miry lane on the right leads to Ockbrook, a village perfectly buried in mud". This was the view of the traveller of 1797. Now it is a wide street with good grass verges. Motorists treat the verges here with more respect than in Victoria Avenue but it is a pity there are no trees. The telegraph posts and the modern concrete lamp posts stand out starkly and the way-side seat does not do a lot to make the view less bleak. Yet it is a very pleasant road, not cluttered with street furniture and blessedly free from parked cars. There is a letter box to 'read', a fire hydrant with S D W B on its concrete leg, widely different dates on the telegraph posts and the street name is the good old-fashioned cast-iron variety.

So what about the name? The spelling is irrelevant in considering the origin of the name. Is it so named because it was the route along which coal was transported? Or does the name come from the old word 'cole' which some maintain means an ancient track?

It is time to begin walking. The east side of road has some of the largest houses in Borrowash, most of them older than those on the west side. But think of the road as it was eighty years ago when there were only three houses between Cromwell House and the position of the present by-pass. Pause at The Hollies, number 185. About the same age as Cromwell House but much smaller, it has some nice architectural details including an iron 'gallery' over the bay. Its grounds covered half an acre and it was built with a greenhouse, stable, coach house and harness room.

Outside this house there is an old lamp standard; another will be seen later near number 161. The name of the maker can still be deciphered, Smith Brothers of Derby, the same as on the post in Manor Road. For many years Cole Lane, from Nottingham Road to Ockbrook village, had only three street lamps; they were put up in 1928, second-hand ones removed from Nottingham Road.

The next old house is number 161. This is probably older than The Hollies, the greater age of the original building indicated by the fact that in 1912 it still had an ash pit, cow house and pig sty, as well as the necessary stable, coach house, and harness room with loft over. It cost £650 in 1891 and then in the next few years had £1,300 spent on "considerable alterations and additions". The brick work on the front wall shows clear signs of three stages in its building. Once called Boston House, it is now known as the Cedars.

Fellside Lodge, where Mr Birkinshaw's chauffeur lived, was built about 1880 and has been much extended since the chauffeur's day. Mr Birkinshaw lived in 'the big house', Fellside, which stands well back from the road behind a very superior garden wall. In Mr Birkinshaw's time the house was described as "substantially built and in excellent repair". Then it had seven bedrooms, one bathroom, four reception rooms, kitchen, pantry, larder, and so on. Outside were two blocks of stabling, two coach houses with lofts, a gas engine room and pump house, a laundry, tool house, two greenhouses, and a potting shed. There was a large garden and tennis and croquet lawns.

This, then, was the new elite quarter of Borrowash at the turn of the century, no houses on the facing side of Cole Lane, paddocks between the houses and fields behind. Since those days more houses have been built in the fields and in the gardens. There is now a policy to halt this in-filling so that the road does not completely lose its old character.

Whilst seeking out the oldest houses on the eastern side of Cole Lane the western side has been ignored. These are mostly houses of this century showing a variety of styles. The grass verges on this western side, wider than those on the east, were once used as roadside gardens owned by the parish

council and let to parishioners at four pence a year. These gardens started at the time of the Enclosure Award, 1773, which laid out very wide roads and the land-hungry inhabitants took over the road sides.

The foot bridge over the by-pass does nothing for the landscape, it is a utilitarian structure presumably designed by an engineer and not by an architect. The Ministry of Transport was loath to admit the necessity for this pedestrian bridge so it was not built until ten years after the Victoria Avenue fly-over. The view from the top of the bridge shows the same distant landmarks picked out on the avenue fly-over but a bit more of Ockbrook village.

We need to walk along the side of the by-pass for a few yards to find the stile to the path cutting across the small fields to reach Priorway. This leads us to the edge of the council house estate built in the 1950s and '60s, a contrast with Cole Lane in the density of housing and in the size of houses. Bearing left we pass the end of Sherwood Avenue and see the bungalows with walls of pre-fabricated concrete sections. Renewal over the last two years has replaced some of the pre-fabricated walls with pleasant, light brickwork. Facing are houses with hipped roofs, the ground-floor walls are similarly being changed from concrete to brick and the area is taking on a much more pleasant aspect.

The provision of shops in such a large estate does not appear to have been over-generous for here they are, all of them. The chairman of the parish council in the sixties (Allan West) had a comment to make on this paucity of services,- "the estate with no church, no pub and no post office of its own, hardly thought of itself as a community at all". In 1973 application was made for a post office to be sited here but the G.P.O. refused on the grounds that the existing post offices were near enough. It is an area still poorly supplied with amenities for the shops, garage, church, community centre, playing fields, pubs and halls are all just beyond its perimeter.

The 'village green' comes as a welcome surprise. It is here that we can turn left into Conway Avenue. This has the oldest houses of the estate, mostly pre-1939, when the building land cost £250 an acre and the houses £420 each. This avenue was a private estate on the land of Prior's Barn Farm and the original plan included shops, a post office and a cinema at the southern end near to Nottingham Road. Alas, these plans were interrupted by a war and only the houses were built. Uncertainty about the future meant that people were unwilling to buy property, so owner-occupiers were few and many houses remained with the builders and were rented out. The shops were never built, the road did not get its road side trees and, after the war, the surrounding fields disappeared under more houses.

Conway bends to rejoin Priorway so we do not have to walk down Priorway and we miss the avenues leading off it. They have names of estates

and families not connected with south Derbyshire and still less with the parish. This is a pity for there are many local events and people who might be better remembered by street names. There is a great similarity in all these streets with uniform houses typical of much of the building of the 1950s.

Priorway is a very significant name. It is a reminder that the estate lies on the land of Prior's Barn Farm (for some years known as Prior's Close Farm). The farm name indicates that an early owner of these acres was Shelford Priory. This Priory in Nottinghamshire lost its possessions in Borrowash at the dissolution of the monasteries but the name remained. In the nineteenth century the land of Prior's Barn Farm stretched from Cole lane in the east to the Ock Brook in the west and as far south as Nottingham Road. Including the two detached fields near the canal the farm had a total of seventy-four acres. The fields are now covered with houses, Prior's Barn Close being roughly where the farm house stood. The first sales of this land for building were in the 1890s when the farm was owned by William Mallalieu of Ockbrook; he sold land bordering Nottingham Road. After Mallalieu's death the tenant, Mr Naylor, became the next owner and he sold more land. The last parts of the farm were sold as building land by R.M. Naylor before 1947.

The southern end of Priorway with the names of Windsor Close and Priorway Gardens has privately built houses, more recent than those we have walked through. Priorway Gardens went up in the early 1970s. This part has paths which would link us up with Walk 9, but we turn left into Nottingham Road to see what use was made of the edge of the farm sold by Mallalieu. The first three to be built were number 207 and the pair at the Cole Lane corner. These three set the standard for the rest of the building because there was a clause in the conveyance of each plot to the effect that the detached houses must have a value not less than that of 207, and semis must have a value not less than 241 and 243. For how long was this condition met?

On the right hand side there are old cottages mixed with much more recent building. Mentmore still has its orchard, but not the two vineries which were there eighty years ago. Appletree Close is the latest development here on the site of Collier's former nursery garden. There are plenty of contrasts to pick out between the two sides of this road as we make our way back to Cole Lane.

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I record my thanks to the staffs of :-

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The Public Record Office

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OCKBROOK AND BORROWASH RECORD SERIES Price £4

I. The Yeomen of Elizabethan Ockbrook. Archives of a Derbyshire Parish in the Sixteenth Century (1994)
II. Lords of the Manor of Ockbrook. Archives of a Derbyshire Parish 1583 to 1605 (1994)

To be published late 1995 or early 1996:-
III. Borrowash Mills on the Derwent. Records from the Thirteenth Century to 1965.

All available from the author:- Marion Johnson,
199 Victoria Avenue,
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